Automated polls still Greek to 61% of Pinoys
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, December 4, 2009 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 159 P18

WITH ONLY MONTHS TO GO BEFORE the May 2010 elections, three in five Filipinos still have little or almost no knowledge of the automated election system to be implemented at the polling precincts.

This was one of the outstanding findings of the latest survey by Pulse Asia, in which 1,800 representative adults were asked a number of election-related questions. The nationwide survey was conducted from Oct. 22 to 30, and the results were released yesterday.

Only 15 percent of the respondents said they had "a great deal of knowl-

AUTOMATED A4

Papers urged to reclaim their online identities

HYDERABAD, INDIA—NEWSPAPER EDitors and owners meeting in India have urged their industry to seize back the online publishing initiative from search engine "parasites" living off their work.

Speaker after speaker at the ongoing three-day World Newspaper Congress in the southern city of Hyderabad argued that the current crisis in the newspaper

PAPERS A6

Pulse survey: 79% won't back GMA bet

President staying away from Teodoro

FOUR OUT OF FIVE FILipinos said they would not support a presidential candidate endorsed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to results of a Pulse Asia nationwide survey released yesterday.

A combined 79 percent of the respondents said they would "surely not vote for" (40 percent) and "probably not vote for" (39 percent) a presidential candidate endorsed by Ms Arroyo.

The outgoing President has endorsed her party mate, Lakas-Kampi-CMD standard bearer Gilbert Teodoro.

Only a combined 15 percent of the respondents said they would "surely vote for" (5 percent) and "probably vote for" (10 percent) the candidate Ms Arroyo endorsed.

Three percent said Ms Arroyo's endorsement would have "no effect" on their choice. The same percentage of respondents was unable to say what impact such an endorsement would have on their choice.

Conducted by Pulse Asia from Oct. 22 to 30 using face-to-face interviews, the survey covered 1,800 adults in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

PULSE A4

10 DAYS LATER President Macapagal-Arroyo views the coffins of slain journalists in General Santos City on Thursday. The journalists were among the 57 people slaughtered on Nov. 23 in Ampatuan, Maguindanao. Later, she visits four other separate wakes also for journalists. AFP

GMA ally taunts: OK, she quits; Noli takes over, boo!

By Leila B. Salaverria and TJ Burgonio

TRUST THE ALLY OF PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo to test out a kindly bogey in her defense.

Apparently to defuse the impact of former President Fidel Ramos' call for Ms Arroyo to step down now

GMA ALLY, A6

Election fever fails to stop mercury drop

By Alexis Papa

NOT EVEN THE HEAT OF THE election campaign can prevent the mercury in thermometers from dropping at this time of the year.

The temperature in Metro Manila over the past few days has dropped below November averages, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said yesterday.

ELECTION A6

SC orders judge to act swiftly on plea to hold trial in Manila

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Inquirer Mindanao

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERday directed a Cotabato City judge to move swiftly on a justice department petition to hold in Manila the trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr, prime suspect in the massacre of 57 people last week.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno ordered Melanio Guerrero, acting presiding judge of the Cotabato City Regional Trial Court Branch 15, to reply within 24 hours to the petition of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

"He is already here in Manila," said Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera. "The situation in Cotabato City does not warrant a trial there. In fact, the three judges are still on leave."

Puno also directed Guerrero to get Ampatuan's comments to the transfer, which usually takes months, and to forward it to the Supreme Court within 24 hours.

The directive came amid a petition for bail for the temporary liberty of Ampatuan, who surrendered three days after the Nov. 23 massacre of the supporters of gubernatorial candi-

SC ORDERS, A10

5 slain women also raped, say PNP forensic experts

By Jocelyn R. Uy

AT LEAST FIVE WOMEN, INcluding a journalist, killed in the Nov. 23 massacre of 57 people in Maguindanao showed traces of semen in their genitals, indicating they were raped before they were shot dead, police forensic experts said yesterday.

In a press conference, Dr. Raby Grace Salmas Dumpoon said that the positive results of an acid phosphatase test conducted on vaginal swabs and pieces of underwear collected from the women may be considered "presumptive evidence."

"It is presumptive evidence because two of the female victims were married and it is possible that they stayed with their husbands before the incident," she said.

5 SLAIN, A11

Tiger admits 'transgressions,' issues apology

THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA—With a public apology and another appeal for privacy, Tiger Woods admitted on Wednesday unspecified "transgressions" that he regrets with "all of my heart," after a magazine reported that he had cheated on multiple affairs.

"I have not been true to my values and the behavior my family deserves," the golf champion said on his website.

It was his longest statement since a middle-of-the-night car crash outside his Florida home last week set off the greatest media scrutiny of Woods' career and his 5-year-old marriage to former model Elin Nordegren.

He did not go into detail and said he would deal with his "personal failings" with his family.

"These feelings should be shared by no one," Woods said.

He spent much of his 337-word statement pleading for privacy after

TIGER, A10

TIGER TAMED Tiger Woods, the world's first billionaire athlete, has admitted having his family down in a statement posted on his website that appeared to confirm rumors of his infidelity. AFP

RACHEL UCHITEL has issued a denial. VIDEO GRAB/YOUTUBE

JAIMEE GRUBBS claims a 31-month affair with Tiger. WORLD

ELIN NORDEGREN, Tiger Woods' wife, finds herself a target of intense media coverage as allegations of his extramarital affairs dominate the news. AP

UN experts: End elite hold on RP politics

GENEVA—INVESTIGATIONS INTO the deaths of 57 people in an election-related massacre in southern Philippines must be the start of a major reform process in the country, two United Nations human rights experts said on Wednesday.

The two experts called for the "effective" prosecution of those behind the killings and an end to manipulation by the elite of the country's election process.

The authorities must also put in place immediate measures to prevent similar murders in the run-up to elections next May, said the experts, who report to the UN Human Rights Council on extrajudicial killings and on freedom of expression.

"The premeditated killing of political opponents, combined with a massive assault on the media, must be

UN EXPERTS A11

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/42
17 24
28 1
17 4

SUERTRES
0 6 8
4 1 7
2 3 7

SIX DIGIT
7 9 0 8 9 9

6/45 LUZ-MIS-MIN
2 10 18 25 26 34
P5,048,352.00

SUPER LOTTO 6/49
7 13 25 36 39 48
P27,855,140.40

5 bets vow to stop GMA bid for House speakership

By Philip C. Tubeza

FIVE PRESIDENTIAL CANdidates have vowed to block any attempt by President Macapagal-Arroyo to continue in power by becoming the Speaker of the House in the next Congress.

Speaking at a Manila forum last Tuesday, Sen. Benigno Aquino III, deposed President Joseph Estrada, Sen. Richard Gordon, evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva, and JC de los Reyes said that, if elected, they would stop Ms Arroyo from becoming Speaker.

According to Aquino, the real danger was an extra-constitutional scenario with no president, vice president, or senator being proclaimed after the May 2010 polls, but only winning House representatives and local officials.

"The danger happens if somehow congressmen are elected that no senator is contented and also no vice president and president," Aquino said at the Hotspots presidential forum at the University of the Visayas.

If that were to happen, Aquino said he would "oppose any recovery" that would try to extend Ms Arroyo's stay in power "beyond what is embodied in our Constitution."

Solid majority

He said he was confident that if elected, he would be able to use his influence as President so that he and not Ms Arroyo would have a "solid majority" in the House.

"We will have the same power to ensure that we will have a solid majority within the House of Representatives to advance our agenda that seeks reforms," he said.

Aquino claimed to know Ms Arroyo's moves having been a student of hers in college and having been a keen student of how she uses power to advance her cause in the past nine years.

But Aquino said he would locate "how to deal" with such a scenario.

The ruling party's presidential candidate, Gilberto Teodoro, said he would not be "threatened" upon and that he expected Ms Arroyo, if she becomes congresswoman, to run the administration Lakas-Kampi-CMD party line.

"A congressman of the party would follow the goals and platform that were set by the party which I lead," he said.

Teodoro admitted that he cannot go against Ms Arroyo now because she was the one who gave him his "break" when she appointed him defense secretary in 2006.

'Things can happen' with GMA in House

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE SPECTER OF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S successor going through what she has endured from her political enemies in Congress is a distinct possibility if Ms Arroyo wins a House seat and her preferred presidential candidate loses in 2010.

This could happen if the President wins a congressional seat and the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD retains political control of the House, as chief presidential legal counsel Raul Gonzalez believes could happen.

Then it's not far-fetched for her House allies to initiate constitutional amendments and serial impeachment complaints against whoever sits in Malacañang.

Of course, everything would depend on Ms Arroyo winning a House seat and the administration standard-bearer, Gilberto "Gibo" Teodoro, winning the election, too? Certainly.

"Let us say that Lakas wins the majority of the votes among congressmen, that Gibo loses yet the party maintains an overwhelming majority in the House and is still dominant, then usually an amendment in the Constitution can follow," he said in a phone interview.

Impeachment spectre

"Things can happen. We can amend the Constitution. You can even do impeachment later against whoever the president will be if the contents a violation of the Constitution," he added.

Gonzalez will have none of those criticizing the President's supposed motives for seeking election to a lower office.

"There is no moral issue there...all these people talking about morality are all hypocrites!" he said.

"When it is something not against the law, there is no immorality involved. If it is illegal there is is immoral," he said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita on Tuesday admitted that creating the 1987 Charter remained a priority of the President.

He said Ms Arroyo would continue to be an influential figure in the incoming Congress, should she win a congressional seat, because of her stature as a former president.

'Definitely immoral'

Election lawyer Simeon Wilfredo yesterday said Ms Arroyo's congressional run "threatens and degrades the Office of the President."

"While constitutional and legal, it is definitely immoral," he said.

Bayan Muna party-list member Teodoro Casiño said Ms Arroyo's return to power as a House representative would be a threat to democracy.

Barnido Macalilod, Ms Arroyo's election lawyer, maintained that the President is running "not for personal interest but because of her sincere desire to continue her contributions to public service."

Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez said Ms Arroyo was running for Congress to continue the fiscal reforms that she had been unable to achieve during her presidential term.

He said some of the revenue-generating laws that the second panel have not handled the House. With her in Congress, she would see to it that these are passed, he said.

Suarez said if and when she picks or for Charter change, it would only be to reform the economic-related provisions in the Constitution, not to change the system of government.

Hurdles is clear

United Opposition spokesperson Ernesto Maceda said Mr Arroyo has several hurdles to clear, including getting the blessings of the new president, before she can become speaker.

"But definitely if the opposition candidate wins, she has absolutely no chance to become speaker, much less prime minister," he said.

Sen. Juliet Arroyo said Ms Arroyo can never be prime minister because for that to happen the Constitution has to be amended first and she does not have the power to do that.

"She is now very weak, she has no political clout, what more if she is only a congresswoman," Juliet said in a forum yesterday.

Neither can she become House Speaker as "the choice of Speaker is the prerogative of the new President," he said. With Leila Salaverria, Alberto M. Lopez and Michael Lim Ubac

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INQUIRER

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Numerous factors continually affect the skin as it matures, ranging from external ones (such as sun exposure and pollutants) to the natural aging process. Over time, as the skin is exposed to various elements, it may acquire blemishes. Dark spots, acne scars and other forms of pigmentation are examples of some imperfections the skin may experience as a result of aging.

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Let Cabinet members quit, Recto urges GMA

By TJ Burgonio

LET YOUR PEOPLE GO, THEY: Sign are packed and they're ready to go.

Former environment planning secretary Ralph Recto yesterday appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to allow eight Cabinet secretaries running for public office in May 2003 to resign.

Recto himself is running for senator under the opposition Liberal Party (LP).

"GMA should release them now to the wild and let Lakas-ed there. Let them think, eat, sleep in the humiliation electoral names," Recto who used to be in the President's party said in a statement.

Eight Cabinet members filed certificates of candidacy (COC) for national and local posts. The Supreme Court has ruled that appointed officials may not be considered to resigned once they file their COCs.

Voting 9-6, the high tribunal on Tuesday ruled as unconstitutional provisions in the election laws that deem appointed officials resigned once they submit candidacy papers.

The petitioners violate the equal protection clause of the Constitution and discrimination against persons holding appointive positions, the majority justice ruled.

Those who filed CoCs were Cabinet Secretary Silvestre Bello III, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, Secretary Hermogenes Esperon of the Presidential Management Staff, migrant Filipino affairs Secretary Jose Brillantes, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Secretary Edgar Aglipay, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, Legal Affairs Undersecretary and Bangsamoro Development Board Chair Yusuf Abdul Imlan.

Recto said he had received word that almost all of the remaining members of the Cabinet had been "dying to resign" to run for public office in May 2003 but were held back by the President's reluctance to accept the campaign period ban.

"If they feel that very, they would quit now out of dedication and in that they could have more time to prepare for their campaigns, but they're not being released from their duties," Recto said.

Palace has 'nothing to gain' in Bulacan

By Leila B. Salaverria

WHY WOULD THE ADMINISTRATION help a member of a rival party?

Sen. Roberto "Sonny" Angara, chairperson and member of Lakas-Kampi-CMD yesterday moved Liberal Party member for accusing the administration of forcing a hand in the removal of Josefito Mendiola from the governorship of Bulacan.

The Commission on Elections recently declared Mendiola-gate, the winner of the 2007 polls last election. Mendiola-gate won with the opposition Sen Gonzalo Pinto (NP).

Thus there is no reason for the administration to push for Mendiola's ouster, said Lakas-Kampi's Rep. Wilfrido Mayuga of Zambales.

Sen. Blas Ople and Mambabatas Rep. Narciso Rubio, Bureau of the LP had said that Mendiola was unseated because he had left Lakas-Kampi to join the LP.

Beginning on and Rubio and Baron insulted the Comelec with their statements. Now a saying for vice president while Illanos is running for senator.

"What they are saying has no basis. Do I and in law. What Mendiola should do is thank the Comelec because even if he lost the elections, he was able to serve for two and a half years," Mayuga said in the Senate investigation yesterday.

He said it appeared the Liberal Party was bereft of issues and was just looking for something to pick on.

"They should think of a issue to run and not find his fault," he said.

RP int'l adoption practices hailed

THE PHILIPPINE POLICY ON INTERcountry adoption has been lauded by the Permanent Bureau of The Hague Conference on Private International Law for its transparent practices, Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said yesterday.

The Hague Conference on Private International Law is an intergovernmental organization that works for the progressive modification of the rules of private international law.

The Philippines' intercountry adoption program is being implemented by the Intercountry Adoption Board (ICAB), an attached agency of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which serves as the central authority for inter-country adoption.

Good practices

In a letter to the DSWD, Jennifer Degeling of the Permanent Bureau said the Philippines is a very good example on inter-country adoption. Hence, the Philippines' inter-country adoption system will be included in the new Intercountry Adoption Guide to Good Practice of the Permanent Bureau.

The Philippines' good practices will be in the chapters entitled, "Perspectives from Practice: Country Experiences and Case Studies." This will contain a description of the structures and arrangements regarding accredited bodies in the Philippines.

Degeling said other countries are expected to benefit from the good practices of the Philippines.

The revision of the new Guide will have the opportunity to see concrete examples of how the inter-country adoption system is being done in the Philippines and how various services are working.

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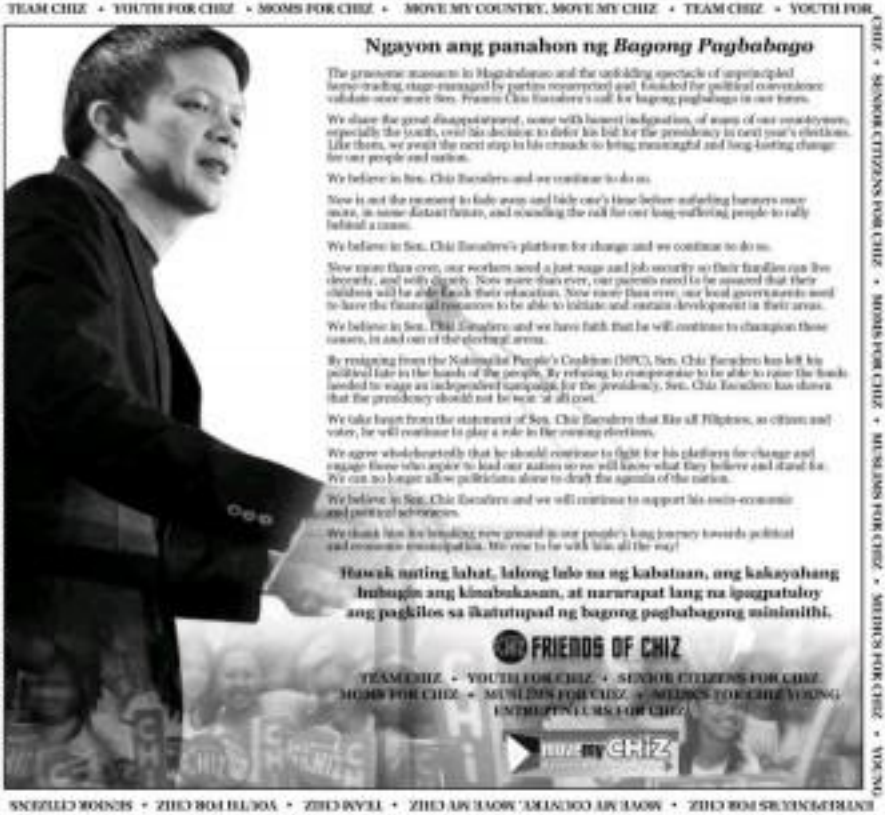

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Pulse survey: 79% won't back GMA bet

Frontpage A1

The opinion poll has enough margin of error of plus-or-minus 2 percentage points.

Unlike other public dissatisfaction with Mr Arroyo, Teodoro has enabled an opposition bandwagon who claim that the President's endorsement will doom his chances.

"There will come a point when the public will already get to brush off this 'kiss of death' thing. It's a political by-product of the eight years. The more important thing is what you want to do for the country in the future," Teodoro said in September.

Staying away from Gibo parties

On the day the survey results were released, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Mr Arroyo would not only stay away from Teodoro's rallies but would also give the administration's candidate free rein to campaign for votes completely.

"I don't think she will do that (join Teodoro's rallies)," Ermita said. "In the end, she wants to concentrate on governance."

In what was seen as a break with tradition, Ms Arroyo did not name the hosts of Teodoro and his running mate, actor-TV host Edu Manzano, at a Malacañang Sto. 19 proclamation rally of the Philippine International Convention Center.

Since then, some observers have noted an apparent attempt by the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD coalition not to make Teodoro and Ms Arroyo share a stage.

After Mr Arroyo filed her certificate of candidacy for Pampanga's second congressional district on Tuesday, Teodoro, a former defense secretary, said he should be judged based on his qualifications, and not on his ties with the President.

But Sen. Mar Roxas, vice presidential candidate of the Liberal Party, said Mr Arroyo's unprecedented move to run for a seat in the House of Representatives showed that she had given up on Teodoro.

"They all know that (this) Ms Arroyo's candidacy has a negative effect on (Gibo's) (Teodoro's) candidacy, but they pursued this. So the question is why is (Gibo's) (Mr Arroyo's) real candidate?" Roxas said in a text message.

Pacquiao, Kris Aquino

In the survey, "Bigshoe editor" as in "sizeable readership" said they would mainly (probably not: 9 percent) vote for candidates endorsed by boxing champion Manny Pacquiao (73 percent), former President Joseph Estrada (59 percent) and TV personalities Willie Revillame (49 percent) and Kris Aquino (49 percent).

A combined 13 percent said they would surely/probably vote for the candidates endorsed by Aquino, while 36 percent said they would surely/probably vote for someone endorsed by Estrada.

Thirty-seven percent said they would surely/probably vote for a candidate endorsed by Revillame, and 22 percent would surely/probably vote for Pacquiao's presidential candidate.

Kris Aquino is backing her brothers Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, presidential candidate of the Liberal Party; Senator is supporting Sen. Manny Villar, standard-bearer of the Nacionalista Party; Estrada is banned to running for president.

Desperate, who is running for congressional in Mandaluyong, can not be really endorsed a presidential candidate.

As for the candidates endorsed by the respondents' Church, 52 percent said they would surely/probably vote for them. In contrast, 40 percent said they would surely/probably not vote for a presidential candidate endorsed by their Church.

Independent-minded

Ermita, chair of the Lakas-Kampi-CMD advisory council, doused speculations that Teodoro was consciously trying to distance himself from Ms Arroyo.

"I believe Teodoro is a very intelligent person. He's very capable, as shown by all the work polls after every debate among presidentiables. He can stand and think on his own," he said.

Ermita said the best (assurance that Teodoro showed his being independent-minded was when he recommended the expulsion of members of the dominant clan from the administration party in the aftermath of the Maguindanao massacre.

Electoral endorsements for president

Endorser	Surely vote for	Probably vote for	Probably NOT vote for	Surely NOT vote for	No Effect	Don't Know/ Refused
Protestant Movement of Bishops	5%	14%	8%	61%	5%	2%
Former President Joseph Estrada	8	28	17	28	2	3
Your shoeboy/ employer group	11	18	17	38	2	3
Bro Eddie	8	21	16	21	3	3
Willie Revillame	8	31	22	28	3	3
Manny Pacquiao	3	10	10	26	3	3

Maximum, as indicated by respondent: Kung sakali na ang isang kandidato ay nagbigay ng suporta kanya, ano ang posibilidad na iboto mo?

+ (SIGURADONG IBOBOTO NIYO (Surely vote for))
+ (MALAMANG IBOBOTO NIYO (Probably vote for))
+ (MALAMANG NA HINDI NIYO IBOBOTO (Probably not vote for))
+ (SIGURADONG HINDI NIYO IBOBOTO (Surely not vote for))

Kung sakaling suportahan ng (read name) ang kandidatong tinukoro ni (read name)

SOURCE: PULSE ASIA

"Did Gibo have to ask Malacañang when he said 'we're expelling the Ampatuans from the party'? No, we did it on our own as a party. That's how independent-minded Gibo is. He's his own man," he said. Reports from Ethan Tolentino, Inquirer researcher; JJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

HANDS ON Ousted President Joseph Estrada and his son Sen. Jinggoy Estrada eat rice in their hands, a regular staple of their campaign routine, during a visit to Montalban, Rizal City, on Thursday. ALCONES

Automated polls still Greek to 61% of Pinoys

Frontpage A1

adept" of the new system to be implemented next year: 26 percent said they had "sufficient" knowledge and a combined 61 percent said they had "a little knowledge" (40 percent) and "almost none or no knowledge at all" (21 percent).

The survey was conducted using face-to-face interviews with 1,800 adults in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

'Not alarming'

Advertisement Commission on Elections (Comelec) officials chose to regard the survey results positively.

"That's only two months before election. We're all involved in this. In my case, I've gone to various places in the country to update and inform people about poll automation," Commissioner Rene Sarmiento told reporters.

"We consider it not alarming ... I don't see it as negative because only around three per hundred could double-time," he said.

Commissioner Gregorio Larrazabal, chair of the Comelec's steering committee for the 2010 poll automation, cited a similar opinion.

"You can look at it (the) way: Four out of 10 know about the automated election system. If we haven't reached with voter education, we supposedly are not many people will know," he said.

12 training teams

Commissioner Larrazabal said the Comelec's voter education program would officially start this month with the deployment in the regions of 12 teams that would demonstrate the workings of the Precinct Count Optical Scan (PCOS) machines.

He said 189 PCOS machines to be used for training were exposed to extreme heat.

"Four manual there will be voter education to be conducted for next year's election," he said.

In the past few months, officials of the Comelec's education and information department and the PCOS manufacturer Smartmatic-Total Information Management had been holding meetings with various sectors to discuss the poll automation system.

Previews of the new technology have also been uploaded in the Web.

Proactive

Commissioner Larrazabal wondered where the survey was conducted.

"It might have been held a long time ago and [the results were] only released now. So while we welcome that information, it would be good for us to know so we have been proactive and aggressive in voter education. A lot are already knowledgeable. Maybe the number [of those clueless] has been reduced by the time," he said.

Sarmiento said he had asked Commission on Elections Acting Chairman Jose Melo to direct the Department of Education's teachers would be oriented in the new system soon.

Clean, credible polls

Among those surveyed, 40 percent agreed that the May elections "will be clean and the results credible since the counting of votes will be automated."

But the number of undecided respondents was just as big, with 43 percent expressing ambivalence at the statement. Only 16 percent disagreed.

Almost seven in 10 respondents (67 percent) believed that the elections would push through; 22 percent were undecided, and 11 percent believed there was small to no possibilities that the elections would be held.

For the other 10 percent agreed with the statement "Most probably will cause if the 2010 elections are not held." Twenty-six percent disagreed, and 24 percent were undecided.

In the event that the elections did not push through, 49 percent said they would support but would not join protest actions, and 40 percent said they would neither support nor join the protests.

Only 13 percent said they would both support and join the protests.

Teachers capable

Almost two in three respondents felt confident that the country's public school teachers are capable of managing the automated election system for the May elections.

Pulse Asia said it was "a sentiment shared by majorities across geographic areas and socioeconomic classes ranging from 53 percent in Region 11 (Davao region) to 68 percent in Western Visayas."

Most of the respondents also have great faith in the country's poll-related results, with 64 percent saying they believed the teachers would perform their duty as members of the board of election inspectors (poll clerk).

The same view was shared by majorities in every geographic area and socioeconomic class.

Among the issues in the headlines during the survey period were the formal declaration of martial Presidents Joseph Estrada and Sen. Loren Legarda of their plans for May 2010, Sen. Francis Escudero's departure from the Nationalist People's Coalition, the continuing search for a missing mayor in South Cotabato Province and Sen. Manuel Villar's continuing relief efforts in the aftermath of Typhoon "Ondoy" and "Pepeng," and the government-imposed freeze on the prices of oil and other energy products, as well as basic commodities. Reports from Ellen Tordesillas, Inquirer Research; Jerome Aning

Papers urged to reclaim their online identities

Frontpage A1

industry required a drastic rethink of Internet concepts.

With print advertising revenues in free fall, the search for real income from digital editions has become something of a Holy Grail for newspaper bosses worldwide.

"One thing is sure, unless we are pioneers and commercially exploit our high value content, the journalistic standards so important to our readers and to society will no longer be financially viable," said Timothy Balding, chief executive of the World Association of News papers and News Publishers (WAN-Ifra).

But options are limited, with WAN-Ifra wanting to increase "visibility" of content against that "in the name of the foreseeable future" will digital advertising revenues replace those lost together.

In a $140-billion print advertising industry, newspaper digital income amounted to just $6 billion in 2008 and is forecast by the consultancy firm, Price waterhouseCoopers, to grow to no more than $9.4 billion by 2013.

Stealing without sharing

For many editors and chief executives in Hyderabad, the efforts in all of this are giant search engines such as Google which, they insist, are stealing their stories without sharing advertising revenue.

"We are allowing our journalism—billions of dollars worth of it every year—to leak onto the Internet," said Lee Hinkle, the chief executive officer of Dow Jones Co., which publishes the Wall Street Journal.

"We are surrendering our hard-earned rights to the search engines and the content thieves of the digital age," Hinkle said.

Under the term News Corp. chair Rupert Murdoch and some other owners, Google offered an olive branch of sorts on Tuesday, announcing it would let publishers set a limit on the number of articles people can read for free through its search engine.

Newspapers also to blame

But many executives argue that Google and its policies are only part of the problem.

"We have sailed Google a digital vampire and a parasite ... but the truth is that this industry is the principal architect of its present difficulty today," Hinkle said.

Seduced by an evangelical belief 15 years ago that websites supported by advertising were the future, they stood to make their content freely available online in the hope that it soon everyone would fall flat never materialized.

Users, the vast majority of them guided by search engines, viewed stretches of their content but did not login, and advertisers soon realized their their budgets would be better spent elsewhere.

"Like an over-eager, undisciplined diet, desperate to look cool, we carried up-to-date, cholesterol-free content for free," Hinkle said.

More problematic

But for many newspapers, especially those in the highly competitive general news market, giving it away in hacking the free online access crucial to more profitable readers.

Some advocate returning a smaller, more loyal readership—and therefore more advertisers—to their free days by patronizing content above the scramble for maximum search engine traffic.

"By simply seeking eyeballs, we have devalued our content to the eyes of our users. We need to reestablish our brands," said Mike Kelly, associate editor of the British tabloid, the Daily Mirror.

"We need to build sites that perform well for humans, not search engines," Kelly said.

Others urge the exploitation of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter which they say can bring readers—especially younger ones—to their websites in far greater numbers than the search engines with their click, consume and move on users.

The New York Times' main Twitter account has 1.7 million followers.

Personalized newspaper

Another possible model for the future is being pioneered by a "personalized" newspaper service, Yesto, which was launched in Berlin several months ago.

Mass formats individual pages from 20 newspapers including the New York Times, Tagesspiegel and Bild. Viewers to the Yesto website can create their own tailor-made newspaper by choosing the topics and pages that interest them.

The Finished print product is then delivered to the home of a reader at a cost of 1.6 euros ($2.71) a year. AFP

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President's men use bishops to rebut bishops

By TJ Burgonio

THE PALACE IS JUST MAKING IT known that not all members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) are against President Macapagal-Arroyo's congressional run.

The Office of the Press Secretary released on Wednesday "personal statement" from Bishop Broderick Pabillo and Vicar Apostolic Isabelo Abbas saying that Ms Arroyo's constitutional right to run for office should be respected.

It also released on that day a brief transcript of CBCP-TV's interview with Cebu archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal.

Asked by a TV reporter whether or not the public should make of his latest use of Ms Arroyo's candidacy, Vidal said:

"Why should it be? If somebody wants to serve the people, who can stop her? President is the Constitution allows that."

Outrage

His remarks drew outrage from a congressional ally representing Pampanga's second district but sparked outrage among various sectors, including bishops.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Jesus Dosado Cruz described it as an "ridiculous, to put it mildly." Earlier, Jaro Archbishop and former CBCP president Angel Lagdameo called on the President "not to give in to the temptation of power."

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the massive support that Ms Arroyo was getting from her province mates should not be taken for granted.

"There is a sampling of sentiments of individuals and groups who hold a contrary view to the others. Let us also listen to them," Ermita said in a statement, where he also appealed to the public to respect Ms Arroyo's decision.

'No legal obstacles'

In his own statement, former Lingayen Vicar Apostolic Bishop said he had been assured by legal experts that there were no constitutional obstacles to Ms Arroyo's candidacy.

"That a President should, immediately after her term, seek a lower office is unusual ... but it is not for that reason removed. It is possible for motives less noble and worthy to be considered, but it is also a principle of law that one should never presume evil or malice of others," Bastoni said.

He said critics' warnings that Ms Arroyo was preparing to become House Speaker and prime minister were all "conjectural."

"It is the sovereign people who, by exercising the power of the ballot, must decide whether or not to allow her to assume office. And whether or not she becomes Speaker ... is for her peers in the House of Representatives to determine by the processes that are legal and fair," he said.

Said Bishop Marquez of the Diocese of Lucena: "I should not stifle people's chance for any public servant to serve and represent them in governance. I leave that in the electorate to decide."

Enrile: Let the Supreme Court decide

AS THE FINAL ARBITER, THE SUPREME COURT should rule on whether President Macapagal-Arroyo can still seek an elective post, according to Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile.

"Let the Supreme Court decide the issue. As a lawyer, I have my own doubts ... I think it's good in a sense that the President [filed] her certificate of candidacy] so that this matter will go to the Supreme Court for final determination, because that is the system we have," he told reporters.

Enrile said Ms Arroyo could even run for the Senate in 2013.

He added: "Those are the legal somersaults that are cropping up. I think it is precisely because of these possibilities that the Constitution said a President is not qualified to run for any reelection, running any election or any election of the after service of the term of president.

"I think instead of asking the President to resign, we should be a little bit more considerate because she is raising these constitutional issues to be resolved by the Supreme Court for the benefit of the country."

Enrile said the nation should not be deprived of a president for the next six months.

"When you talk of defeating, property that is not in the law. That is addressed to the person involved," he said, but pointed out that US President Quincy Adams did not let Congress alone his term ended. Michael Lim Ubac

GMA ally taunts: OK, she quits ...

From page A1

need a job?

after she filed her certificate of candidacy for congressional representative of Pampanga's Second Dist. Sandra Ilusorio to effect panel this question: Do you want Vice President Noli de Castro to lead the country while the economy is in the doldrums?

Suarez said Ms Arroyo—also holds a doctorate in economics and taught the subject in top schools—had to convince lawmakers the candidacy because her expertise was very much needed in the face of the broadening global economy and the Philippines' own shaky financial health.

Financial uncertainty

'Assuming she would leave to resign...I'm not believing the capacity of Vice President De Castro to take up the reins of government—we're now facing a recession, bank run, collapse of financial giants. I think Vice President De Castro would have a problem in confronting these issues,' Suarez said at yesterday's Serye forum to Quezon City.

There was no comment from De Castro, who was a popular broadcaster before he entered the political arena and steadily rose in senator and vice president.

According to Suarez, Ms Arroyo has withstood scandal-ridden and attempts to unseat her because of her administration's strong fiscal position, which is her "bedrock."

Thus, he said, Ms Arroyo should not quit the presidency during these times of financial uncertainty: "It is good for us that even if the President would sit for a seat in Congress, she would have to contend with the fact that we are not out the frame."

'Grave consequences'

Ramon, whose relation with Malacañang have been strained since the merger of administration parties Lakas and Kampi, called on the President on Wednesday to resign in order to level the playing field in the second district of Pampanga, which she wants to represent.

He said Ms Arroyo being a sitting President would give her "undue advantage" over her opponents. (Three others—architect Alexis Simpao, electronics engineer Felicisimo Serrano and entrepreneur Filipinas Lampung—are seeking the same position.)

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Ms Arroyo would be turning her back on her constitutional mandate if she heed-ed Ramon's call.

"The term of the President ends June 30, 2010, and for [her] to relinquish the presidency sooner is to abandon her sworn constitutional duty," Ermita said in a statement.

He pointed out that Ramon had taken the same oath as president and was thus aware that a resignation "brings with it grave consequences."

"It is a virtual abandonment of the Office of the President and an actual repudiation of the oath," he said.

Ermita said he regarded Ramon with "high esteem" but disagreed with the latter's call not only because the President must fulfill her constitutional mandate but also because her "continued tenure redounds to [our] benefit."

"The Filipino people, having sworn allegiance to the President, accepts and understands fully and conscientiously 'fulfill my duties as President,' with her term to begin at noon, the 30th day of June following the day of the election, and shall end at noon of the same day six years thereafter," he said.

'Clavor'

Ramon skipped the May 28 formal launch of the merged Lakas-Kampi-CMD, which he said lacked consultation. Sometime, he has been taking potshots at the President and her administration, and has refused the offer that he serve as the party's chief emeritus.

But Ermita said Ramon should not take against Ms Arroyo her previous stance/clamor for her to seek the congressional seat.

"President Arroyo, from all indications, as shown during the filing of her certificate of candidacy [on Tuesday], commands the overwhelming support and affection of the residents of her district," Ermita said.

"Obviously, that is something that cannot be taken against her, neither by the former President nor by anybody [else] for that matter," he said.

'Inexcusably mysterious'

Ramon had described Ms Arroyo's decision to run for Congress as "inexcusably mysterious," and said it "diminishes the stature of the presidency."

But Ermita appealed to the public to respect Ms Arroyo's move: "Give credence/leading to the appeals of her countrymen, and uphold the Constitution and the law."

Election fever fails to stop ...

From page A1

The minimum temperature in the metropolis dropped to 19.8 degrees Celsius on Wednesday and to 19.7 degrees on Thursday, lower by a little more than 2 degrees from the November levels, according to Celia Feria of the Pagasa weather station.

The reading was taken between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m. at Pagasa's facilities at the Science Garden in Quezon City.

Really cold weather

"For November, the average minimum temperature is 22.1 degrees Celsius," Feria said. So, what we are experiencing now is really cold weather," Feria said.

For Baguio City, the minimum temperature recorded on Thursday was 12.1 degrees, slightly lower than the 12.4 degrees of Wednesday. The readings were also taken between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m.

The record minimum temperature registered in Baguio was 6.3 degrees in January 1961. This is also the record for the lowest temperature in the country.

For Metro Manila, the record stands at 14.5 degrees, taken at Port Area in January 1914.

Due to northeast monsoon

Feria attributed the drop in temperatures to the surge in the northeast monsoon, known as the amihan, the cold air from the northern hemisphere that starts to blow into the country from December to March.

While the temperatures drop, Pagasa is tracking a tropical depression, "Pepeng," spotted 1,240 kilometers east northeast of Basco, Batanes.

Then expecting maximum sustained winds of 55 kilometers per hour near the center with gustiness of up to 90 kph. While the system is currently stationary, the weather disturbance is too far to affect any part of the country.

Kidnapped priest flies to Ireland for vacation

By Dave Puzzlingan

DUBLIN (Reuters) — Fr. Michael Sinnott, who was held captive by yet unidentified armed men in Mindanao for 22 days, left for his homeland before dawn yesterday.

"I feel fine, going back home and looking forward to the weather (in Ireland). It's windy, wet and cold," the 59-year-old Columban missionary was quoted as saying by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines news website ahead of his departure for Ireland just 10 a.m. Right at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Fr. Patrick O'Donoghue, regional director of the Missionary Society of St. Columban, accompanied Sinnott in the trip.

Sinnott said he will take a five-week vacation before he returns to Pagadian City on Jan. 15.

After his month-long ordeal, Sinnott said wanted to return to Pagadian City where he has been based since 1988 helping handicapped children. But since he has a heart condition, he was advised by his doctor to remain in Manila to recover.

"I wish my friends in Pagadian will have peace and no more kidnapping," Sinnott replied when asked for his Christmas wish for his friends in the Philippines.

"I hope the Filipino people and the Catholic Church in the Philippines will be able to obtain peace in Mindanao without any bloodshed. We hope the relations will be successful and we'll have an honest president," he replied when asked for his Christmas wish for the Filipino people.

He will celebrate his 60th birthday in Ireland next week.

Sinnott was abducted by a group of armed men from his home in Pagadian City last Oct. 11. His abductors took him by speedboat into the jungles spanning the boundaries of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur, an area supposedly controlled by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

His kidnappers later released a video of the priest with the demand for a $2 million ransom.

Sinnott was released on Nov. 12 through the intervention of the MILF.

Sinnott and government officials maintained, however, that no ransom was paid.

The Daily Gospel

Friday, December 4, 2009
1st Week of Advent
John of Damascus

1st Reading: Is 29:17-24
Gospel: Mt 9:27-31

As Jesus passed on from Capernaum, two blind men followed him, shouting, "Son of David, help us!" When he was about to enter the house, the blind men caught up with him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can able to do what you want?" They answered, "Yes, sir!"

Then Jesus touched their eyes and said "As you have believed, so let it be." And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus gave them a stern warning, "Be careful and let no one know about this." But as soon as they were away, they spread the news about him through the whole area.

Commentary:

We know we're safe in the arms of God, we just have to believe it. As Christians we often fall prey to senseless fears. We would so worry and fret over things which we cannot control. We're very aware that God is with us, yet we have difficulty letting over our fears to Him. For some reason, we find it necessary to cling to the things that UNDER upon to relieve, we want to handle them ourselves.

Christ said it plainly: "Don't be afraid, just believe." Just believe! It's easy for us to insist that we trust God completely when, in fact, we fail time by not fully believing in Him. We know God will care for us, however we fail to believe what we know. What fear attacks us, whether it is health issues, children or anything else, we should remember what Christ said: "Don't be afraid, just believe." We should always keep these words close in our heart. God of all strength and wisdom, help us to believe what we know to be true... that is you, our loving God!

SC orders judge to act swiftly on plea to hold trial in Manila

From page A1

dan) Ismael Mangudadatu.

The wife and two sisters of Mangudadatu, vice mayor of Buluan, were among those killed, along with 30 journalists who were in convoy the filing of his candidacy.

Nondebatable offense

Deriansaba said she would object to the petition, pointing out that Ampatuan was accused of multiple murder, a nonbailable offense.

Ampatuan, namesake son of the powerful Maguindanao governor and in charge of Sajonia Town, is detained at the National Bureau of Investigation in Manila.

Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fortaleza said that the preliminary investigation of two suspected gunmen—policemen Ismael Comiso and Telegan Dilon—would begin Dec. 14 at the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame where they are detained.

Comiso and Dilon were arrested shortly after the massacre after their firearms, an M-16 rifle and a shotgun, matched the spent shells and slugs recovered at the crime scene. They have been charged jointly with illegal possession of firearms.

Positively identified

Commander on Human Rights Chito Leido de Leon said that the two members of the Civilian Volunteers Organization (CVO) positively identified Ampatuan and four other clan members among the 100 gunmen who seized the Maguindanao province, journalists and motorists who had unwittingly entered into the area and slaughtered them.

De Leon, who was present when the two militiamen gave statements on Wednesday night, said Dilon admitted participating in the shooting upon orders of Ampatuan.

"He said the shots hit the victims who were already sprawled on the ground. Dilon said he only fired several shots," De Leon said.

State prosecutors also announced that Maguindanao Gov. Ismail Ampatuan Sr., four other clan members and five others would be subpoenaed next week to appear at a preliminary investigation that was yet to be scheduled.

Others subpoenaed

Unlike in the case of the younger Ampatuan, who was arrested and immediately indicted on Nov. 25, the other Ampatuans cannot be arrested without a court warrant since authorities are no longer empowered to "bar yourself" of the suspects, the prosecutors said.

The others to be subpoenaed—all Datu Magpalong Ampatuan—are Shariff Aguak Vice Mayor Sinsi Ulo Sinpatuan, Maguindanao Mayor Esmael Ampatuan, Sultan Elsa Mayor Kasan Ampatuan and police auxiliary Tony Annie Ampatuan in Shariff Aguak and Datu Unsay Mahamad Sangki of Datu Abdullah Sankli Sanggadong Bayan, police auxiliary Tomi Yimba Abas and PO3 Abbey Getadem of the Datu Unsay municipal police service.

They have been placed on the immigration watch list, being key to 19 the total suspects who cannot leave the country without the approval of the Bureau of Immigration.

The PNP has also filed a complaint in the DOJ against a certain Raymundo Bart, supposedly a CIVO member in Datu Unsay, a certain Bahaney and 300 other still unidentified suspects.

The preliminary investigation will be held at the DOJ, Padilla said.

The PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) filed on Wednesday afternoon a complaint against the Ampatuans for six counts of murder in connection with the deaths of lawyers Cynthia Oquendo-Ayao and Castillon Oquendo and alejandro "Bong" Bellosillo, Jejomar C. Cadagitan, Wan Gilbert Amelo and Francisco Rubang Jr.

More troop reinforcements

"The complaint will be evaluated by a panel of prosecutors who will conduct a regular preliminary investigation. As of this time there's no state yet to speak of," Bacholbo said.

The Philippine Army yesterday sent an additional battalion to reinforce more than 3,000 troops guarding the compound of the Ampatuans clan in Maguindanao.

"Our forces are now stationed on the area. They are reinforcing their movements within the compound," said Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr., spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The move is also meant to support the PNP if arrest warrants are issued to clan members to be charged with murder.

"Right now the security is very tight in the area. We are stopping their supporters from entering their home," Brawner said, adding that 10 armored personnel carriers and tanks had been sent to the area.

Lawyers of the Ampatuans yesterday filed a petition for a writ of amparo against the military—a measure adopted by the Supreme Court to protect victims of human rights abuses.

"Even with the declaration of state of emergency in the province, it does not suspend the right to habeas and other fundamental freedoms," said lawyer Anwar Khalid Malicambo.

GMA visits region

In her first visit to the region since the massacre, President Macapagal-Arroyo attended a wake for slain journalists at the Catholic Pastoral Bureau in General Santos City, chatting with relatives of the victims for 30 minutes.

She then proceeded to Koronadal City, where she had a briefing on the incident from the military. She said why it took the military five hours to respond after getting a call at 11 a.m., but the question went unanswered.

After presiding over a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a P11.8-million business center and ground-breaking of a P12.4-million inn, Ms. Arroyo turned to four separate wakes for slain journalists.

"They will not escape justice," the President told the widow of Reuters Marcella of Bonbo Bailey. The woman who had just flown in from Kuwait where she worked to a domestic helper was told by Ms Arroyo that relatives of the victims would receive government assistance.

"Justice first," Ivy Marcella told the President, "then the compensation."

Bird reports from Jocelyn R. Uy, Willie Onate, Jeannette I. Andrade, Alden B. Lopez and Vicente R. Gervacio, Joelle R. Badilla and Noli R. Mendoza, Inquirer Mindanao, AFP

SC asked to stop Palace takeover of ARMM

DOX ZALDY AMPATUAN OF the autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao asked the Supreme Court to stop Malacañang from taking over the ARMM and its moves to suspend his family members occupying elective positions.

In his 39-page petition for temporary restraining order, Zaldy Ampatuan asked the high court to declare Mr. Arroyo's Proclamation No. 1959 and Administrative Order No. 273, issued after the massacre, unconstitutional and illegal.

"Let it not also be forgotten that this takeover could be a tool for political expediency to stifle free elections, to favor administration bodies) candidates and to emasculate any opposition," the petition said.

The Ampatuans clan is a close Arroyo ally, helping the President and her allies win crucial votes in the 2004 and 2007 elections. Dona Z. Pazzibugan

TEN DAYS after the slaughter of 57 people, including 32 media workers, Presidents Arroyo is briefed on the status of the investigation of the massacre in the hills of Ampatuan in Maguindanao. She visited the victims' wakes in Gen. Santos and Koronadal and vowed justice on the families of slain journalists.

5 slain women also raped, say PNP forensic experts

From page A1

"I'm not here to pressure with the DNA testing ... if and when there is a 1 chromosome, we will be getting samples from the husbands of these victims."

Dimapan said that it was up to the prosecutors to include rape among the charges against the perpetrators of the massacre of a convoy of political supporters, along with journalists, who were out to file the candidacy of Buluan Vice Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu.

The victims were identified as Rubilou Palawan, Reclaro Calimbol, Merry Palabrica and Cecille Lechonicio and journalist Lea Ordinario of Sovereign News in General Santos City.

The Philippine National Police has conducted autopsies on 57 bodies, which included 15 male and six female victims. The rest of the fatalities were taken to the National Bureau of Investigation, which earlier said that 15 female victims tested negative for rape.

Only the body of Cynthia Ayao has yet to be examined for traces of semen, Dimapan said.

Pants pulled down

But strong indications of sexual abuse were found on Lechonicio, who had a bruising or an "insult" in her genitalia, she said.

Such result can also be corroborated by a finding of one of the medico-legal officers showing that her pants were pulled down before she was killed, Dimapan said.

"There is a possibility that sexual abuse may have happened," she said, adding that this could be true in the case of Lechonicio.

While all the other victims sustained gunshot wound on their bodies, it appeared that only Lechonicio was shot in the mouth at close range. She could have been mistaken for a relative of Mangudadatu, said Dr. Dean Gabrera. In fact, she was among the members who stepped into the area.

Mangudadatu's wife and two sisters were among those murdered.

Tiger admits 'transgressions,' issues apology

From page A1

celebrity gossip magazines and tabloids reported on three women who claimed to have been his mistresses.

Shortly after the investigation of the car accidents ended Tuesday with a $164 citation for careless driving, In Touch reported that a Los Angeles cocktail waitress claimed she had a 31-month affair with the world's No. 1 golfer.

Tiger's voice mail

About three hours before Woods' statement, the magazine released what it said was a voice mail—procured by the waitress, Jamie Grubbs—that Woods left on his phone three days before his accident.

"I will strive to be a better person and the husband and father that my family deserves," Woods said on his website. "For all of those who have supported me over the years, I offer my profound apology."

Woods' statement has been largely without blemish since he turned pro at age 19. Three of his sponsors—Nike, Gatorade and XS Sports—expressed support or commitment to Woods. AT&T declined comment.

In the most critical comment from a player, Jesper Parnevik said he owed Newsgroup an apology for introducing her to Woods. She once worked as a nanny for the Parnevik family.

"She probably thought he was a hero, or got that bit in," Parnevik told The Golf Channel.

Driver rather than 3-iron

Police said Woods' wife told them she smashed out the back window of his Cadillac Escalade SUV with a golf club to help get him out after he struck a fire hydrant and tree.

"I would probably need to apologize to her and hope she sees a driver now instead of a 3-iron," Parnevik said.

"It's a private thing, of course," the Swede golfer said. "But when you are the guy he is—the world's best athlete—you should think more before you do stuff ... and maybe not. Just do it," Mr Nike says."

But other professional athletes had sympathy for Woods.

NFL player Jason Taylor walked in to the Miami Dolphins' locker room and saw ESPN running a joke about Woods. He reached up and turned off the TV. "Nobody's damned business," Taylor said.

Police report

The Woods saga started at 2:25 a.m. on Nov. 27, when he crashed his car outside his home where he lives with Elin and their two children.

In his final report on Wednesday, the Florida Highway Patrol said Woods caused $5,100 in property damage, was not wearing a seat belt and was traveling 48 kilometers per hour in a 40 kph zone.

The report said Woods' SUV rubbed up against bushes, crossed over a curb, struck a grass median and hit a row of hedges before striking the fire hydrant and a tree. Damage to his Cadillac Escalade was estimated at $8,000.

First meeting

Her story damaging to his image was the Us Weekly cover story.

Grubbs told the magazine that she met Woods at a Las Vegas nightclub the week after the 2007 Masters—two months before Woods' wife gave birth to their first child.

In the voice mail released by the magazine, a man says to Grubbs:

"Hey, it's, uh, it's Tiger. I need you to do me a huge favor. Um, can you please, uh, take your name off your phone. My wife went through my phone. And, uh, may be calling you. If you can, please take your name off that and, um, and what do you call it just have it as a number on the voice mail, just have it as your telephone number. That's it, OK. I'm gonna do this for me. Huge. Quickly. All right."

Woods' limited response after the crash—the first statement on Friday spoke of a "minor accident"—fueled speculation about a domestic dispute.

On-and-off affair

"The stories in particular that physical violence played any role in the car accident were utterly false and malicious," Woods said on Wednesday. "Elin has always done more to support me family and shown more grace than anyone could possibly expect."

THE DEC. 14, 2009, issue of "Us Weekly Magazine" says it all. The issue hits the newsstands in the United States on Friday.

Woods acknowledged his celebrity status—82 victories, 14 majors and the first $1-billion athlete—while outmaneuvering his right to keep his personal affairs just that.

"But no matter how intense curiosity about public figures can be, there is an important and deep principle at stake which is the right to some simple, human measure of privacy," Woods said.

Woods' earlier three car-same who don't share my view on that. But for me, the virtue of privacy is one that must be protected by matters that are intimate and within one's own family. Beyond that should not require press releases and prohibited within a family shouldn't have to mount public confession."

According to the magazine, Grubbs said she was 21 when she was first approached by Woods in Las Vegas. The magazine said that meeting "progressed into a clandestine on-and-off affair" that included hundreds of text messages.

'They are human'

Mike, Woods' biggest sponsor, said its advertising plans involving him would not change.

"We respect Tiger's request for privacy and our thoughts are with Tiger and his family at this time," Nike said.

Gillette on Wednesday issued an expanded statement indicating it was making an exception to its practice of declining comments on the private lives of its brand ambassadors.

"Like each of us, they are human," Gillette said. "And like each of us, they endure mistakes. By acknowledging and learning from their mistakes, we hope they will become even better, both in the game and beyond."

A similar refrain came from Gatorade. Reports from AP, New York Times Wire Services, Reuters and AFP

He broke No. 1 rule: Always come clean

WASHINGTON—PUBLIC RELATIONS experts assessing the fallout from Tiger Woods' car crash and apparent extramarital affair say the golf superstar broke a cardinal damage-control rule: Come clean in public at the start of a scandal.

"Really and truly, the best thing to do is to speak the truth," said Tevin Williams, whose New York-based PR firm has represented leading celebrities from the worlds of entertainment and athletics.

Professionals in Williams' industry who make their living burnishing the images of celebrity clients, said they followed the troubled role when handling the sort of sexual peccadillos that many suspected Woods had committed.

"The first thing you do is, just acknowledge the mistake—the human error," Williams said. "What's important is how you move on from there."

Vince McMahon of the NCO monitoring and public relations firm, said that Woods' biggest misstep was waiting too long to issue a statement acknowledging his personal missteps.

Williams said she too had had clients over the years who had failed to head the issue-honored "just come clean" PR advice—and who usually regretted it.

While sexual peccadillos may not be career busters, naively about personal indiscretion remains damaging.

Americans—once seen as puritanical in their moral standards—are now generally forgiving about affairs, sex scandals, Williams said.

She added: "What it comes to isn't: Did I have people saying all the time, 'so what else is new?' This is taken more as—especially now in the public eye."

AFP

Libanan won't run, stays put as immigration chief

By Jerome Aning

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan has decided not to seek public office and chose to continue working the agency and improving its services.

Libanan, of Immigration spokesperson Elaine Tomas said that Libanan, who spent his week-end at his home province in Eastern Samar last week, decided against running for an elective position, including his old seat as Eastern Samar congressman.

Tomas said that although he considered once saying Libanan would run a new mandate, the immigration chief opted to be "satisfied on his task of implementing the Bureau into a world-class immigration office, comparable to advanced and modern countries."

"We are even encouraged by Libanan's words and foreign assurance talk only to take a shot in the Senate under the administration party Lakas-Kampi-CMD, believing that Libanan can fulfill both ideas as legislator is what he has done in the BI," Tomas said in a statement.

Libanan, the spokesperson said, decided to remain as the top official of the Bureau and help the government in its drive for preserving peaceful and prosperous the country as investment haven for foreigners.

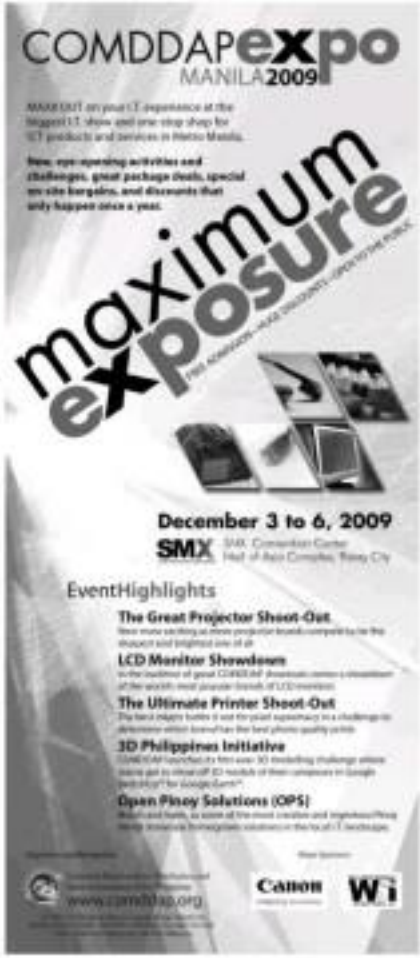
The commissioner, as was was recently cited by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) for his "commitment to excellence and good governance, reforms and promotion of inward trade, investments and tourism."

Even President Macapagal-Arroyo lauded the reforms made by Libanan in the agency.

Bolante added that with the Dec. 1 midnight deadline filing of certificates of candidacy expired, Libanan "proved to his detractors and critics that he never used the agency to pursue his political interest."

"I think Commissioner Libanan is more focused in modernizing the bureau and to give Filipinos more job opportunities through the special visa for employment generation," he added.

Bolante added that he believes that when the BI chief's term ends, Libanan would concentrate on his other talents, particularly music. The commissioner was a soloist in the West Irish ensemble for two successive years—last year and this year—by the Alan Jansen Foundation Inc.



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GIANT TREE, BRIGHT LIGHTS
Fireworks light up the sky of Puerto Princesa City during the lighting of the city's 120-foot Christmas tree on Wednesday. The traditional lighting of the tree at the city's Rajeruk signals the start of the Christmas season in Puerto Princesa. RAY LLANA

Quakes rattle GenSan, Ormoc

By Alcuin Papa

TWO MILD EARTHQUAKES SHOOK THE Visayas and Mindanao regions yesterday.

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), a magnitude 4.9 quake struck the area off General Santos City at 5:28 a.m.

The quake had a depth of 4.9 kilometers and was estimated at 305 km northwest of Jose Abad Santos (GA).

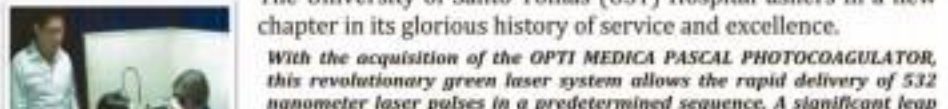
The area has been seismically active since last weekend with four mild quakes recorded last Sunday and another last Tuesday.

At 12:10 p.m., the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) recorded a 3.6 quake 17 km east of Ormoc City. It had a depth of 11 km and was felt in Tabontabon, Leyte.

No aftershocks or damage were recorded.

The country lies in a region known as the Pacific Ring of Fire that is characterized by a high rate of volcanic and seismic activity.

UST Hospital welcomes the new dawn



The University of Santo Tomas (UST) Hospital ushers in a new chapter in its glorious history of service and excellence.

With the acquisition of the OPTI MEDICA PASCAL PHOTOCOAGULATOR, this revolutionary green laser system allows the rapid delivery of 532 nanometer laser pulses in a predetermined sequence. A significant leap forward from single-spot green laser photocoagulation, the PASCAL Method allows physicians to control the precision, safety and efficiency of the photocoagulation procedure, while optimizing patient comfort and convenience. Patients experience less pain and reduced treatment duration than with traditional, single-spot laser photocoagulation.

Slit Lamp with Digital Photography and video imaging provides a vivid documentation of corneal lesions for comparison in the future.

This conscious choice to invest in technology is a reaffirmation of UST Hospital's commitment to provide the best quality healthcare possible and to continually foster the development of medical expertise. The University of Santo Tomas Hospital joins the entire University system in celebrating 400 years of dedication, service quality, and operational excellence.

*Digital Photography Slit Lamp System with Patient Database

MAGNIFICENT

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España Blvd., Sampaloc, Manila, Philippines 1008
Tel. No.: (+632) 731-3001 to 29
Website: http://www.ustHospital.com.ph

UN experts: End elite hold on RP politics

From page A1

tackled at various levels that go well beyond standard murder investigations," declared the two experts, Philip Alston and Frank La Rue.

The massacre took place in Maguindanao province on Nov. 23 in the Philippines' deadliest-ever election-related crime. The killings were blamed on members of the Ampatuan family, whom President Macapagal-Arroyo has in the past called valuable political allies.

Threat to democracy

Alston said La Rue said the inquiry "must be followed by effective prosecutions of all those responsible for the killings."

But the measures should also spark an intensive reflection "on the elite family-dominated manipulation of the political processes and the need to eliminate such practices in order to assure the future of democracy in the Philippines," they said.

The two UN experts—Alston from the United States and La Rue from Guatemala—said any broad inquiry into the country's political system would have to focus on how to improve protection for journalists, 38 of whom died in the massacre.

Even more urgent was the creation of a task force to prevent more election-related killings.

"There is every indication that the run up to the May elections will sound the death knell for many political activists," the two added.

UN intervention

In Manila, journalists and Philippine media groups might ask the United Nations to intervene in the probe of the massacre.

"We're considering all options, including asking the (UN rights body to step into the massacre)," Melinda Quintos de Jesus, executive director of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, told reporters, adding the local press must "not drop the ball to allow the suspects to get away with the murders."

Int'l press group's mission

International press groups were also sending a mission to the Philippines to look into the massacre.

Around 15 delegates from groups like the International Federation of Journalists, the Southeast Asian Press Alliance, and the Committee to Protect Journalists were expected to arrive in Manila this weekend, according to National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) board member Ilonena Parsons.

"The clamor that there is international attention on this incident, as it should be. The trip will also be an expression of solidarity with local journalists," Parsons said.

Parsons said members of the media would march on the Don Chino Roces Bridge (formerly Mendiola) on Dec. 8 as part of the Global Day of Action for the slain journalists.

In a report released yesterday, a fact-finding team that went to Maguindanao observed that police had handled evidence poorly, leading to its possible contamination.

"There was little or no coordination given to preserving the evidence. There was little or no coordination given to avoid the contamination of the crime scene," the report said.

The group said the vehicles used by the suspects in stopping a convoy carrying journalists and relatives of a clan opposed to the Ampatuans were still unaccounted for.

"Investigators said the suspects also used a blazer Frontier pickup with police markings. One such police vehicle issued to the Maguindanao police is still unaccounted for. Was plus with claims by policemen that police vehicles were involved in the blockade," the team said.

'Culture of fear and silence'

The killings have stoked fear among residents in some areas of Mindanao.

Fr. Edgardo Templonuevo, OMI, director of the Zal Indio Bikon Inter-Communities of the Philippines (CEAP) for Central Mindanao, cited a recent incident in which several students, out of fear, canceled their participation in a search for peace in Southern.

"It has created a culture of fear and silence among the people, including the students, Christians and Muslims alike. But that fear did not stem from that massacre incident alone, but because of the history of violence in the area," Templonuevo said.

In a statement, the association of 3,472 member schools, colleges and universities said: "This mass murder ... has shortcircuited the entire corrupt individuals are willing to go in order to arrogate the power to themselves."

Msgr. Jerry Santos, president of the CEAP said the group was demanding long-term solutions to the decades-old conflict that had forced thousands to live in fear and subhuman conditions.

"We ask the government to dismantle private armies and put an end to the anarchy of clans in the region," Santos said.

Reports from Reuters, Alcuin Papa and Doris C. Santos

INQUIRER

OPINION

Shallow pool

EDITORIAL

WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT US, AND THE QUALity of our politics, when the first senators to file his certificate of candidacy for reelection in May 2010 was the one who should not have been elected to the Senate in the first place? Sen. Lito Lapid has proven himself eminently unqualified for the work of the Senate, not because he is an actor or a celebrity, but because he has done nothing noteworthy in his six-year term. Naturally, more than in Philippine politics, Lapid is favored to win reelection.

That, sadly, is where we are. Despite three massive tectonic shifts in the political landscape in a single year, the pool of candidates for the Senate has turned out to be very shallow indeed.

The chords of democracy too Genesse Ayatee awakened millions of Filipinos to the glory days of People Power, a distant time of both decency and possibility; the floods unleashed by "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" shocked millions of Filipinos into realizing both those vulnerability and the need for a massive investment to reconstruct or create anew

Damaged goods

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

PHILIPPINE POLITICAL CONVENTION WAS shattered on Monday when for the first time since the restoration of democracy in 1986, three disgraced and discredited top leaders fled overtly, career of candidacy for elected positions to a bid to regain power.

The assault on the ground rules of electoral politics was led by President Macapagal-Arroyo, who filed her certificate to run as representative of the second district of her home province, Pampanga, at the end of her term in June 2010. She fired because she first filed a move prohibited by a ruling by the Supreme Court. Ms Arroyo's move has opened the way for drastic change in the Philippine political landscape.

On the same day, Nov. 30, the deadline for the filing of COCs in the May election, disgraced Vice-President Noli de Castro, who earlier had resigned from the Cabinet to run for president, and Imelda Marcos, widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, filed to run for representative in the Ilocos Norte electorate of Marcos, who was deposed in the 1986 People Power revolution.

Known for her extravagant lifestyle and fond for collecting a few thousand pairs of shoes, Imelda Marcos was governor of the Metro Manila area, thereby considered the second most powerful person in the land during the dictatorship. She has a record in the Sandiganbayan as number four in graft political power, using Congress as a platform to restore politics and rehabilitate the Marcos legacy, marred by a record of corruption in government that sent the economy to its knees, of human rights violations and abuse of power.

The family's two active political clans triggered national controversy as much as the division of President Arroyo, who is barred by the Constitution from seeking reelection after she serves out her six-year elected term in May to seek an office of president or member of the House of Representatives.

Whatever the real motives behind the bids of President Arroyo or of Imelda Marcos, both are politically damaged goods seeking a second chance to better their legacies.

President Arroyo is seeking congressional immunity from political vendetta, buffeted by the unbelievers over the maneuvers of 57 unarmed people by armed bands of political warlords in Maguindanao, and stigmatized by the lowest popularity rating ever received by any Filipino president since the 1986 People Power Revolution that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

Estrada is no less damaged goods, but he is even more ambitious than either Ms Arroyo or Marcos. He is seeking election directly to the presidency, not just a parliamentary seat as a platform to return to the presidency, despite the fact that he was not only impeached by the House and tried by the Senate acting as the impeachment tribunal, for receiving pay-offs from jueteng, an illegal form of gambling. The trial was aborted after the Senate prosecutors failed to present the bank documents. The suppression provoked a street insurrection that forced the collapse of his government, leading to the accession of then Vice President Arroyo to the presidency. He was prosecuted after he lost his office for plunder and was convicted. He was pardoned by President Arroyo. Estrada's prospects for a second chance are dim.

While Estrada is not considered as a serious contender for the presidency, the decision of Vice-President Arroyo to seek a seat in Congress in the event of a controversy and public outrage (which provoked a demand for her resignation, she is criticized for trying to use a seat in Congress as a springboard to engineer a constitutional coup to shift to the parliamentary system through which she can maneuver her way to be elected prime minister. Given the dynamics of building alliances in parliament starting from zero base, I consider this scenario far-fetched and too hypothetical. This scenario is a weak argument for dismissing her resignation.

The strongest and more persuasive argument to justify her resignation comes former President Fidel V. Ramos, founder of the majority coalition of the administration, the Lakas-Kampi-CMD (Lakas-Kampi-Christian Muslim Democrats) party. The political architect of the Presidential Succession has urged the President to step down immediately after filing her certificate of candidacy, instead of staying in office until the expiration of her term in June, but continued exercising power given her by certain advantages over rivals. Ramos said, "In the interests of fair play, GMA should resign so as not to give her undue advantage over whoever will run against her," he said.

The President has claimed her electorate fill more than one district, referring to such public works projects as her calibrated weather coverage.

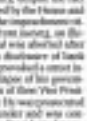
During the next few months until the May election, the President will continue to be bathed with the vast powers of the presidency, including those of the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, the power of appointment, and enormous patronage of government personnel, and dispenser of patronage. Ramos pointed out that faced with such odds, nobody has a chance to win against her.

When Ramos did not say is that during the campaign season, the President can use those resources available to her to assist administration candidates for Congress to build a majority in the legislature behind the project of amending the Constitution to shift to the parliamentary system.

But there is no way to stop the President from pursuing this objective. She will cling to and defy demands for her resignation. The option is confrontational. It has the impedance of a key easily

Record-breaking

AT LARGE



Rina Jimenez-David

WE SEEM TO BE SETTING A RECORD FOR BEING records in this country, especially in the last few months. We cheered on Manny Pacquiao for winning an unprecedented seventh international title in a seventh weight division. We greeted with fulsome praise senior volunteer Efren Peñaflorida for heralding candidates from all over the world and being chosen CNN's "Hero of the Year."

The archipelago also lived up to its location in the "rim" of the Pacific typhoon belt, when Tropical Storm "Ondoy" dumped record amounts of rainfall last Sept. 26, drowning much of Metro Manila and causing untold human and property hardships in damage. Ondoy was followed closely by Typhoon "Pepeng," which unleashed mudslides in the Cordilleras and, with the release of water to some dams, covered much of Pangasinan and nearby provinces in floodwater. As great havoc been the losses from these two disasters that we have what could perhaps be a record-breaking level of hunger and food shortages next year.

And then there's the suspicious, Maguindanao, Massacre. We barged into the record books by way of the unbelievable brutality of this episode of "election violence," which left 57 people, including 30 media men and women, the single biggest toll of journalists in a single incident anywhere in the world.

There is one last record-setting event: the filing of a certificate of candidacy for representative of the second district of Pampanga by Arroyo, who has announced that she has no intention of stepping down from office before her term ends. Coupled with GMA for three decades is a former President Ramos, a statement (though partisanly obnoxious) who has formulated his presidential and even of the legality of the candidacy is being questioned before the Supreme Court.

What is past? One is President who, as radio listeners commented, is so hungry for power that she must "feed twice at the trough" of government. The other is former leader whose term was tarnished by the corruption of his wife, the jailing of 30 media men and women, the single biggest toll of journalists in a single incident anywhere in the world.

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MS ARROYO'S candidacy makes sense only in the context of nonetheless favorable conditions for her to run for office — within the next few months but which now has gained currency. (Never mind the blather about her continuing desire to serve her constituents.)

How exactly does GMA plan to turn her House seat into a presidential perch in power? The scenario mapped out for her by the Ramos-Enrile-Estrada-Arroyo party-mates promising they will manage to cling to a majority in the House and Senate—to turn Congress into a constituent assembly which then amends the Constitution and transforms our form of government from presidential to parliamentary. Banking on this same majority GMA then manages to wrestle the position of prime minister, and leave the sitting president into a largely ceremonial figure.

This scenario presumes several things: that Lakas-Kampi holds onto its majority in Congress, that the party or GMA manages to coopt the more malleable senators, and most important, that the Filipino people elect a president who will be supinely and allow a move-congress-to-cass from Pampanga to walk all over them.

The last may well be the most important quality voters could use to judge the fitness for office of the candidates who have strayed themselves before us. We must ask ourselves, now that GMA has lined up to our sworn fears, who among the candidates has the most likely brutal nerve and accommodate her wishes, and who would stand up to her insatiable desire for power and thwart her every step of the way.

GILBERT Teodoro has sought to create the image of a resilient, upright figure, first in his contentious his finding his loyalty to GMA) and done about his priorities. He is articulate and his intelligent drawn through in his statements. But as he himself has stated, he owes his rise in the public arena to the President, and he is not the sort to turn his back on those who have given him favors.

He also owes the viability of his candidacy to Lakas-Kampi-CMD, many of whose members openly accepted him grudgingly and as the presiding of the party leadership. When GMA and her cabal make the crash for position, will Teodoro have the numbers on his side to stem back the tide? Will he have the steps to stand in the way and block what the President's supporters have painted as the inevitable?

Despite his years in government, and the positions he has held, Manny Villar remains a rather his personal convictions and stands on issues pressing matter and difficult to pin down. He says his priority is economic development, leaving the poor from the clutches of poverty and banking on his experience in an economy that has been battered by the fate of a GMA blindsiding toward a Con-ass and the mangling of the Constitution? Will he stand in the way of the tanks or side step the rumbling behemoths, opting for the safer alternative of overseas economies and leaving the day to day business of governance to Prime Minister Arroyo?

Of the candidates, only Villar has many of us will choose our candidates based on demeanor, articulateness and polish. But we need to overlook the essential qualities of character and powers of the brute contract. I am confident only of Nicanor Aquino, who has known and was raised for the position of athletic endurance. We know this not only because he is the son of Ninoy and Cory but also because of his record as a congressman and senator. We know this because the Liberal Party is seriously contemplating every strain of dispute, including the 2nd district of Pampanga, and because Ninoy and Cory raised their children to wage a battle in Congress when the time does come.

The UP mass mashing incident of 1941

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN AN EXCLUSIVE school for women banned the use of chairs' dues because this allowed loud dates to see what was hidden under the skirt reflected on the mirror-like surface of the shoes.

There are still isolated instances of the same today where mirrors and cell phones are used but the prob is less. Some things never change.

In our MRT and LRT systems the front coaches are reserved for women only not so much for their comfort, but to discourage mashing so as not say "shaming" by lewd men when the trains are packed. Mashing is the act of "pressing one's sex in one only during peak hours, in the Philippines where we like to overdo things, the front coaches are always reserved for women and accompanying children.

I don't know if they allow a man and his wife to take the same front coach. Or do they separate to take the ordinary coach? Perhaps the couple want to be together and this woman saves her privilege to take the front coach?

All these reminded me of the "mass mashing incident" in the University of the Philippines in 1941.

On the morning of Dec. 4, 1941, a torch parade was held from the Legislative Building (now National Museum) via Taft Avenue to the UP campus on Padre Faura, Ermita, in honor of Speaker Jose Yulo who had just retired from the United States. Upon reaching UP the students stopped their torches on a spot designated by a bonfire, and in the confusion, which many suspect was the Philippine Women's University, were surrounded by men who allegedly "mashed the women."

In uproar caused in the following days, with Manila City Councilor Carmen Planas denouncing the incident and saying it was an "unthinking spur of the moment" act. Planas then presented her "anti-mashing" ordinance, claiming the measure was "called" by the Nationalista majority in the council for political reasons. She called for stiffer penalties for mashing at an offense broadly defined as "unjust vexation." Hugging and kissing a woman was also considered "mashing."

From 6:30 PM to midnight, Planas proposed imprisonment of not less than 20 days, or a fine of P25, or both for the first offense, and a fine of not less than P200 or imprisonment of not less than two months, or both for the second offense. Planas seemed to be fond of the number "two" and just kept adding more for the next person later. The author of this matter, the new ordinance also required that repeat offenders' mugshots be published in the papers with the caption "convicted for mashing."

Maximo Rubio went on the warpath, to speech on and press releases, he blasted UP president Bienvenido Gonzalez for the lax security on campus. Rubio considered for the lax security on campus. Rubio considered the incident as one of national importance.

Fortunately journalists saw through the grandstanding. Amando Doronila in his well-read Tribune column, "Good Morning Judge," took pot-shots at the opportunistic politicians shooting the mashing incident to popularity. With the threat of war in Europe spreading to Manila, Doronila wrote wittily, "If a few unlighted torches can ignite over a mashing spree), I hate to think what would happen in case of a complete blackout—the average Filipino, especially if he has been to college, is not to be trusted in the dark, and if blackout is not enforced here in the event of war, the girls will have a time of it fighting invasion on two fronts."

Then Duarte turned his guns on the Planas anti-mashing ordinance: "Banning probably thinks this will abolish mashing, and if she does, she's entitled to her opinion. We hold a more pessimistic view of the matter. We think mashing will never be abolished until we abolish the public school system." Since the College Editors Guild elected its "most mashed co-ed," I have asked, what about electing an "most obligate mashee"? David's Salad solution was among girls with hairpins for their sides and protection.

Amid all the sound and fury, truth was hidden away by all these self-serving politicians' press releases. The real issue was not mashing but Japanese reported that the Manila date of police declared that there was no disturbance in the torch parade and no complaints were brought to them or filed that evening over mashing or other crimes.

Why the fuss over nothing? PWU president Francisco Benitez explained, "What we have the "mashed" girls interviewed by the police or the press, as the case was denied. Therefore, Benitez congratulated the girls for fighting their way out of UP by beating the men with their shoes and scratching them until bleeding.

Mashing does not seem to have passed since this men broke out and made the headlines. A historian is left with newspaper accounts, and if he is lucky, oral history from a person who was there or involved.

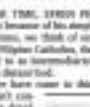
What really happened that night in 1941? Mashed hoax or mass mash? Those were dangerous days, and I doubt if anyone would be mashed in such a public place. Was the hoax living up to the UP reputation of being high spirited and rowdy? Were the PWU students living up to the warped ideal of Maria Clara? In retrospect, this trivial bit of excitement in the press underscores conquer and overcome our issues with theirs, one moves with that of the past.

Comments at web.ambeth.ocampo@gmail.com

Heroes, saints

IN ANCIENT TIMES, HEROS PENAFLORIDA WOULD BE called a saint because of his simplicity and total dedication. But in our times, we think of saints as beings up there in heaven. For Filipino Catholics, they're supernatural beings to be prayed to as intermediaries, helping to make a case with a rather distant God.

Perhaps we have come to think that the contemporary world just isn't conducive to the development of saints. In our modern times, we (well maybe more the Americans and Australians) still need cultures like our own) speak in terms of heroes, as in CNN Hero of the Year. (Note that BBC has a similar award, also won once by a Filipino, but then call it the Challenge Award.) Heroes are supposed to be more powerful than saints, fighters for our causes.



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Social scientists—psychologists and anthropologists, in particular—say that we all need heroes to emulate. That need might be more acute in the Philippines, given how we are bombarded with images of villains and scoundrels. Hate into the dearth of heroes—did you know that officially we still don't have a national hero or national heroine, apart from Rizal? Is a more right now to declare Gene Tunney by law?

If and when we do it, though, I'm afraid those heroes will again be taken from among the ranks of the dead, secular equivalents of saints. I can imagine too the arguments that will erupt about who should be considered our national heroes.

We need living heroes, but I worry too about how heroism in Hollywood-land (or CNN-land). Many media, and that includes film, have a way of transforming heroes into superhuman idols, and who else but Manny Pacquiao comes to mind?

Idol

I hadn't realized the extent of this idolization until recently, when I dropped by a bookstore and one of the salesladies approached me and, with a bit of shyness, asked if she could read the magazine I had in a shopping bag. She had spotted Pacquiao's picture on the front magazine.

After I handed her the magazine, she began to turn the pages very reverently, almost afraid, it seemed, to miss the cover story. When she finally got to it, you could see how thrilled she was...it was almost as if she was meeting Pacquiao in person.

I learned eventually that she and her husband were avid Pacquiao fans, and were collecting Pacquiao memorabilia. The time came was to her sights, but she said it was a bit expensive. Later as I checked out the books I bought, she pointed to a magazine next to the cash register that she kept, almost like a holy picture. It was an American boxing magazine with Pacquiao, and other boxers, on the cover.

Our Americans might be more abroad, I am sure, with her almost submerged like adoration of Pacquiao. One local newscaster featured, some time back, a middle-aged man, clearly already a fan, showing off his collection of Pacquiao paraphernalia, displayed in his living room and looking very much like an altar.

Today's heroes still carry some of the pains of saints, including awe and shining veneration. There are expressions as well of perfection or near perfection, sometimes promoted by their publicists (that's the newer term now for public relations manager). Tiger Woods is a prime example, projected with a squeaky clean image of the guy who broke racial barriers in golf. He was even personally participated by a fight with his wife, but unleashed all kinds of lurid media reports about another side to Woods—everything from food explosions he must when playing golf to an extramarital relationship.

What a terrible burden today's hero-celebrities carry. Perhaps we need to recognize too the humanity of our heroes, most especially how they overcome personal adversities, as Pacquiao did. That's why he appeared on Time's cover with the caption "The Great Hope," for we need more than heroes dangling hopes, especially for a hero's life through boxing. We need someone like Peñaflorida who is able to defy the odds, and who refuses to barter people behind.

Inhuman

We need heroes, no matter how, like those of the saints, remind us of the problems around us. Peñaflorida is a hero because he tackles unapologetically that both the government and private sector have failed in giving the life to children's education, he asks us to think of our own priorities.

Heroes often choose to defy, even subvert, social norms. We associate subversion with political dissent, but there are other less visible but equally powerful forms of subversion. In Peñaflorida's case, I was struck by how his mother had initially not to program, to urge her support to overcome her fear for the United Nations, after her mother had passed. He would not have liked that, the mother explained.

I thought that was very subversive in a country where people are supposed to splurge on a blow-out for every conceivable, and especially after getting an award. Peñaflorida did not have to debate a conscience explanation why there was no blow-out. He has made his priorities clear, and he is obviously not alone. Many people have responded generously (totaling $125,000) goes back to the street dance-music projects and to his church.

Perhaps it's time we went back to the whole rationale of calling people saints. Saints are meant to be exemplars, role models for the living. Throughout the history of religions, we have had saints representing the various virtues we consider the worthy. But this romanticism did not mean a retreat. Many saints did choose as well to engage the world with all its harsh realities.

We like St. Francis of Assisi for the stories about his love for animals, but forget he was also a champion of the downtrodden and that during the Crusades he even attempted to get into trouble with Catholic Church authorities because of its strong advocacy of a simple lifestyle, something that contrasted too sharply with the opulence of the bishops and cardinals.

I'd think that many any of those saints would probably have started human characters like Peñaflorida did, if they had been born in the Philippines and in our times.

The rise of Peñaflorida's heroism is yet to come, the temptation to become, as most of today's "heroes" go, a celebrity. Alas, for celebrities, performance then becomes primary, pandering to, and being off the manufactured hunnies of publicists.

Given the manufactured heroes of our times, what we might need are saint heroes. Away from the limelight, continuing to work as Hugo II, Peñaflorida could leave his mark, developing many more of tomorrow's heroes.

E-mail: mtan@inquirer.com.ph

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Tourism opportunities

THE IMPROVING BAD BEEN included in the National Geographic magazine's annual survey of the 7 best, out of 20 in Harbor "must" list, between 11-16 DE. This will give us a chance to show tourists the right reasons for visiting the country.

The magazine listed some that begins in Bataan in the Corregidor Islands, tourists will be treated by the grandeur of the Bataan monuments, one of the wonders of the world. Then, tourists should be told that the Philippines is the top, it has the second biggest, underground river in the world.

The next top tourist spot Hundred's canyoning, a means of environmental degradation, specifically from the effects of "developmental" projects such as mega-dams, mining and logging operations, and land conversion projects. This is more of agricultural lands and the mountains in other parts of the country.

Other tourist destinations are our beaches and rice terraces. Along the shores would be interesting "black and white" pictures—human waves alongside fisherfolk communities, poor in all possible ways but rich in the products of the sea. Our rice terraces, declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) as one of the wonders of the world, are also a must-see.

The rice terraces are literally carvings

Hijacked super-tanker anchors off pirates' den

NAIROBI—THE HIJACKED SAUDI super-tanker Sirius Centurion anchored Wednesday off the village of Hobyo in northern Somalia, a Kenyan maritime official told AFP.

The vessel was seized here the Seychelles on Sunday with its 25 crew members, becoming the second super-sized tanker to be captured by rampaging Somali pirates in 13 months.

"Sirius Centurion dropped anchor in Hobyo this morning," said Andrew Mwangura of the Seafarers Assistance Programme. "The crew is reported safe."

The pirates are yet to make known demands for the huge vessel with a crew of 16 Filipinos, also Greeks, two Ukrainians and a Romanian.

It was hijacked while on its way from Saudi Arabia to the United States, fully-laden with oil.

On Monday, the Athens-based owners, Marsin Tankers Management, said no contact had been made with the ship since its seizure.

Hobyo is one of the three main pirate dens in the north of the Indian Ocean nation.

Mwangura said pirates are currently holding 12 ships and 295 sailors. The majority were seized since early October at the end of the monsoon season.

The Sirius Centurion is the second oil tanker captured by pirates, following the hijacking of the Sirius Star in November last year with a cargo estimated to be worth around 100 million dollars.

It was released in January after the payment of a ransom. AFP

CHAIN GANG

A farmer chains himself to Gate 1 of Malacañang Palace with his manicure close by on his chin. He and several other farmers trooped to Malacañang Thursday to seek an executive order to immediately ban aerial spraying in banana plantations. Police and Palace guards used bolt cutters to cut the farmers' chains and disperse the protest. —NOY MORCOSO

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Message from the Chairman of Board

In behalf of the directors and governors of the Philippine Board of Surgery, I would like to congratulate the new diplomates. Your attainment of this status as specialists in general surgery is a fulfillment of years of dedicated work. Likewise, we would also congratulate your families and friends who have supported you through your long years of medical education and hospital training. We wish you success in your surgical practice and hope that you will always uphold the loftiest ideals of our profession in the service of your patients.

Nelson D. Caballuna, M.D.
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CANDIDATES TO BE CONFERRED THE TITLE DIPLOMATE OF THE PHILIPPINE BOARD OF SURGERY

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

CLOSE PALS Romeo Jalosjos, a child rape convict freed after his sentence was commuted, and President Macapagal-Arroyo, credited with Jalosjos' deliverance from a longer jail term, meet in May at the opening of Jalosjos' Fantasyland in Dapitan City. AQUINO/MALACAÑANG

Jalosjos sends proxies to poll wars he's waging

OZAMIZ CITY—BARRED BY law from seeking any elective office, convicted child rapist and former Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Romeo Jalosjos is instead waging a proxy political war not only in his turf but in neighboring provinces as well.

The family's carry-on Misamis Occidental politics is via the candidacy of daughter Svetlana for mayor of the coastal town of Baliangao.

Svetlana, who runs Bernardyland—Dapitan City's newest attraction—is teaming up with former Vice Mayor Agapito "Ap-Ap" Aguilon III, who established residency in the town through a bondi owner she fatally bought almost a year ago.

Their tandem fuses clout of Aguilon III's uncle Agnes, former town mayor, and his wife, Agapito III is son of Agnes's eldest brother, who served as Baliangao mayor until his death in 1995.

Agapito III had a falling out with Agnes, currently vice mayor, after failing in his rumored unsigned bid in 2007 when his term ended. Bypassing his father as mayor until 1998, Agapito III gave way to Agnes's mayoral bid on condition that he will replace him after nine years.

Baliangao is the base of the once mighty Ong family, whose power and political influence Jalosjos also challenged with a proxy battle before.

Through allies and their alliances, Jalosjos ran the Ong political empire into Zamboanga del Norte's third town in 1992, and mounted a heavy raid on their gulp area Misamis Occidental's Sapang Dalaga town in 2004.

In Zamboanga Sibugay, Jalosjos' son Romel beat Rep. Aris Hafiz Hataas Jr. is seeking to take over their congressional seat.

Jalosjos' youngest brother, Cesar, is expected to be formally endorsed congressman of the third district while his son Baltar, currently provincial board member, is expected to replace his aunt, Cecilia Jalosjos Carreon, who is on her last term as representative.

Carreon, in turn, will take on the mayoralty of Piñan town, where her own family is based.

The reelection bid of Jalosjos' look-a-like brother, Dominador, for Dapitan city mayor is also expected to be easy. Ryan D. Rosauro *and Julie O. Alijada, Inquirer Mindanao*

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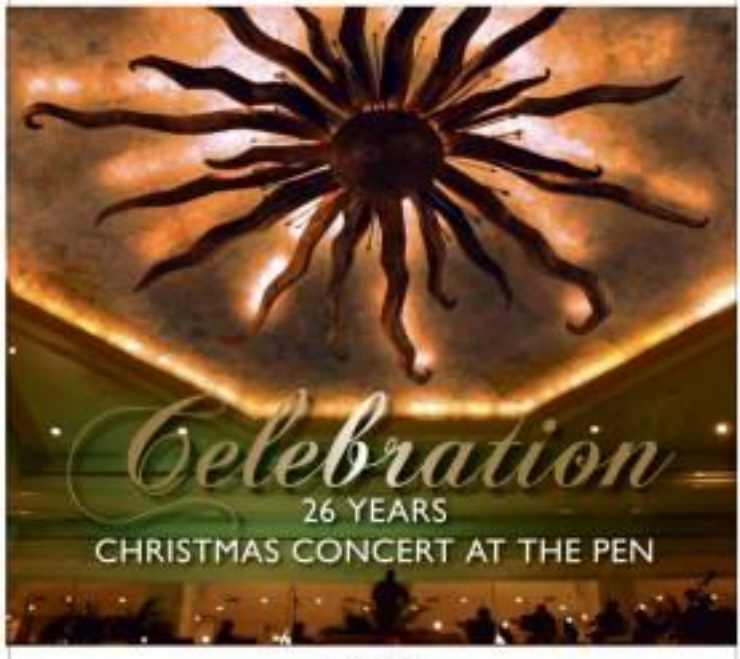

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Osmeñas keep clan poll dreams alive

By Jhonne Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—AT LEAST SIX MEMBERS OF the Osmeña clan have filed certificates of candidacy for various positions in next year's elections, a sign that the once powerful Cebu political dinchan not breathed its last.

Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña, who is on his last term, filed on Monday his CoC for congressman of Cebu City south district while his wife, Margot, will run for councilor of the city's north district.

The other Osmeñas running for elective posts in the city include the mayor's sister, Georgia, who will run for mayor; the mayor's nephew, Cebu City south district Councilor Richard Osmeña, who will seek reelection; Tomas's Emilio Osmeña Oppus, running for councilor; and former Gov. Johnny Osmeña, who is fighting Georgia for mayor of the city.

Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul del Mar, who is on his last term, is fielding his daughter and chief of staff, Rachel Cuide del Mar, for the Cebu City north district congressional seat.

Candles lit in Leyte for massacre victims

By Jael Arnaiz
Inquirer Visayas

BAAYEN CITY—LOCAL JOURNALISTS held a candle-lighting ceremony here for the 30 colleagues who died in the Maguindanao massacre Wednesday afternoon.

Members of the Associated Media of Southern Leyte (AMSL) gathered at the flood monument in the National Tuberculosis Plaza in Baaien City where they lighted 30 candles and prayed for the souls of the 30 journalists who died in the mass murder.

They also issued a statement condemning the massacre.

AMSL members also learned that one of those killed hailed from Hindang, Leyte, 40 km from Baaien City.

The victim was 30-year-old Benjie Adolfo who drove the vehicle where journalist Bernalito Embalsa, of Gold Star Daily Inquirer Zamboanga, was the passenger.

Adolfo's mother, Virginia, said she was shocked when she learned about her son's death.

In an interview Thursday, Virginia disclosed that Adolfo was the one who financed the education of his 13-year-old sister since her husband had died.

Adolfo's uncle Jose Luis Adolfo Jr. said he and his wife went to General Santos City to fetch his nephew's body.

THE TWO vessels that collided in Cebu City at the Mactan Channel. One—MV Wonderful Stars (at right)—was leaving port while the other one—MV Sublic Bay 1...was docking.

Claim delays land title for Boracay Ati folk

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE TITLING OF LAND FOR THE Ati community in Boracay has been blocked after a property claimant filed a petition opposing the survey of the final parcel as a permanent relocation site for the Ati.

In an eight-page petition filed on Nov. 24 at the Iloilo-Aklan Regional Trial Court, claimant Gregorio Antonio sought an injunction to bar the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) from conducting a survey of the 2.1-hectare property in Barangay Manoc-Manoc in Boracay.

In his petition, Antonio claimed that he bought the property, composed of two parcels of land, on Sept. 20, 1973 from the previous owner, Hermenegilda Gelito.

He said for the past 36 years, he has occupied the land.

Legal procedures

Antonio sought a temporary restraining order (TRO) against the NCIP survey scheduled on Nov. 24-30.

The RTC granted a 72-hour TRO, which lapsed on Nov. 27, and nullified the case on DTC Boracay's bid to have the petition for injunction.

The NCIP has identified the property as a permanent relocation site for 19 families.

Engineer Isidoro NCIP chair, said in an earlier interview the agency has "adequately established" that the Ati were the original occupants of the island since "time immemorial."

Isidoro said the commission would move on how and issue a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) to the Ati community, which will own the land as a communal property.

The area is now the beachfront would be suitable for fishing, one of the main sources of livelihood of the community.

Isidoro said the issuance of the CADT would proceed despite the ownership claims of the three claimants over the land.

A matter of justice

"This will not require because as a matter of justice, the land of the Ati should be given to them," he said.

Anthropologists have backed up claims that the Ati were the earliest settlers on the island but were displaced and driven away starting in the 1970s when businessmen flocked to the island to ride on its commercial boom.

The Ati families, who have been living in a one-hectare lot in Sitio Balabag in Barangay Balabag, had applied for a CADT on Feb. 22, 2000 to put an end to their eviction from the land.

Bayan Muna Representative Satur Ocampo and Teodoro Casiño, Gabriela Representatives Liza Maza and Luzviminda Ilagan, and Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano earlier filed a resolution to investigate the displacement of the Ati because of development projects on the island.

Ilagan said the NCIP and other government agencies would also provide livelihood assistance for the Ati community when they are relocated.

At least P15 million would be needed to put up houses for the 66 families and to install septic tanks and other facilities for the community.

PASSENGERS of MV Wonderful Stars are brought to safety after their ship collided with the MV Sublic Bay 1 in the Mactan Channel.

500 passengers brought to safety after collision

By Jhanno Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—AT LEAST 500 passengers were safe after the ship they were carrying there collided with another vessel in the Mactan Channel just off this city's port on Sunday.

The MV Wonderful Stars, a passenger ship of the Sulpicio Shipping Lines, and MV Sublic Bay 1, a passenger-cargo ship of Cokaliong Lines, collided at 10:30 a.m. as the latter was leaving Pier 4 here and Sublic Bay was maneuvering to dock.

Lt. Junior Grade Medwell Ursabia, Coast Guard information officer, said Wonderful Stars carried 319 passengers and an undetermined number of crewmen.

Wonderful Stars was leaving Pier 4 while Sublic Bay 1 was on its way to the Gothong Wharf in Mandaue City when the collision took place.

Sublic Bay 1 continued its voyage and docked at the Gothong Wharf but the Wonderful Stars ran aground.

Ursabia said Coast Guard boats and engineers from Subic Shipping and Sublic Lines were sent to ferry the 319 passengers from Wonderful Stars back to this city's port.

Wonderful Stars was towed back to Pier 4, said Ursabia. The captains of the two vessels were opposed to the marine protests.

In Abra, unwritten pact on status quo won't hold

BANGUED CITY—ABRA POLITicians had agreed to leave incumbent officials unchallenged in next year's elections, but it seems the unwritten agreement won't going to hold.

Joint publication in the province, known for election-related killings for years, forced the Dec. 1 deadline to file their certificates of candidacy against their rivals.

The flood elevation and police officials to monitor Abra's security situation on Wednesday.

Chief Supt. Orlando Bonoan, Cordillera police director, said the "status quo" agreement was never made public, although it was common knowledge to their leaders.

The pact's failure, however, became a potential source of violence," he said.

Governor and assistant Governor Eustaquio Bayacsan Valera had denied the existence of the agreement.

Bonoan declined to identify the politicians who defied the agreement.

But based on Comelec records, members of the Valera Luna and Bayacsan families are contesting the province's lone congressional seat and the provincial seat of Bangued, Abra's capital town.

Rene Luna, son of incumbent Abra Rep. Vicente Luna, is challenging the reelection bid of Bangued Mayor Jeronimo Valera.

Family affair

Representative Luna's reelection will be challenged by three opponents.

Governor Bayacsan is running for reelection against Lito Sangco Jr.

Lawyer Abby Tesoro Gamboa Cordillera director, said it is too early to conclude that elections upon Armed in Abra.

Gen Gamboa added said the agreement was undemocratic.

"[The status quo agreement] would have resulted in peace, yes, but it would not have reflected the true will of the electorate ...."

Hot spot

In 2001, the government placed Abra under the control of the Philippine National Police after a government fact-finding team confirmed an increase in poor that politicians employed private armed groups, including policemen and soldiers.

In 2007, the Comelec announced control over the province due to 200 election-related cases that killed 129 people.

Former Abra Gov. Vicente Valera was arrested and jailed in September for his vote for he alleged involvement in the 2006 murder of Abra Rep. Luis Bersamin Jr., brother of incumbent Gov. Bernardo Bersamin. Valera had denied the involvement in Bersamin's murder.

Quezon gov gets tough on Sariaya quarrying

LUCENA CITY—More than 30 trucks hauling boulders, rocks, cobblestones and other quarry materials from Sariaya town in Quezon have been stopped by environment officials and police since Wednesday.

Francisco Serilla, environment officer of the Provincial Mining and Engineering Board (PMEB), said a team launched operations to stop the transport of the materials in order of Gov. Rafael Nantes.

Serilla said the truck owners and drivers would be charged with violating Department of Environment and Natural Resources order to stop quarrying in the province.

On Wednesday, Nantes met with multisectoral leaders from Sariaya to discuss the worsening quarry operations in the area.

Lawyer Sheila de Leon, chief of the environmental group Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Tagalog, said Nantes led on closed the PMEB and police to arrest all haulers of quarry materials from Sariaya. Jeffrey T. Webber Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

NEWS

US gives $10M more for typhoon victims

THE UNITED STATES has DONATED an additional $10 million to help about two million Filipinos cope with the aftermath of back-to-back typhoons that devastated Luzon.

Nearly 1,000 people died when Tropical Storm "Ondoy" struck in September and were quickly followed in October by Tropical Storm "Pepeng" and "Santi."

The three storms unleashed the heaviest flooding in decades in and around Metro Manila and the northern mountains, where landslides buried entire families.

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney said on Thursday the latest assistance brought total American aid for the typhoon victims to $36 million.

The United Nations is separately seeking $144 million to cover the work of relief aid agencies until March 2010.

Kenney said the money would be used for education, water and health needs.

She made the announcement on the Model Road Program's (NPP) logistics hub in Baguio City.

She said the additional assistance would "help address the continuing needs of our friends in the Philippines, including the needs of communities cut off from where we are standing."

The US was among the first countries to come to the aid of the Philippines after the storms struck, initially providing more than $14 million to help over 13 million victims of the storms.

On Nov. 12, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced an additional $5.2 million in disaster relief and recovery assistance during a short visit to the Philippines.

"I commend Filipinos and our international partners for their long-term commitment to help those most affected by the storms. As we move our efforts from relief to rehabilitation and recovery, logistics will increasingly become a key component to future undertakings," Kenney said.

Kenney will visit Barangay Little Baguio in La Trinidad, Benguet, one of the areas in the Cordillera hardest hit by Pepeng when a landslide killed 77 people on Oct. 6.

Kenney will also take part in the hand-over of relief items to 141 Ifugao-Kiangan residents still out of their homes.

Cynthia D. Balana, AP

Thanks to Our Partners in Education

Smart Communications, Inc.'s (SMART) KabaYan sa EduAsyon Program was recently cited the best education program in Asia at the 2009 Asian Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Awards. The same program also received a citation from Intel Asian Institute of Management Corporate Responsibility Awards (IACRA).

KabaYan sa EduAsyon is a cluster of programs that has benefitted over 300 schools, more than 11,000 teachers and approximately 83,000 students since SMART launched its first education initiative in 2005.

These include:

- **Smart Schools Program** which provides Internet connectivity, teacher training and online content development for elementary and high school public schools

- **SMART Wireless Engineering Education Program (SWEEP)** which seeks to help raise the level of electronics and communications engineering courses in colleges and universities

- **Application Developers Intro School (ADIS)** that provides industry-grade training for information technology (IT) students

- **Read-to-be-Smart** that mobilizes SMART employee volunteers to help teach grade school students better reading skills

"On behalf of the men and women of SMART, I'd like to thank the board of judges, the Ateneo Center for Corporate Responsibility and its partners for this prestigious and very much appreciated award. But this honor does not belong only to SMART. We share it with all our partners – the Department of Education, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), our partner schools, and our other partners in the local government and private sectors," said SMART President and CEO Napoleon L. Nazareno. "What has been accomplished so far is the result of genuine partnership. SMART will continue to be a kabalikat or partner in the pursuit of effective and sustainable education programs."

The award ceremonies were held in conjunction with the 8th Asian Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility last November 20 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. SMART's Alternative Power for Cell Sites Program was also an Excellence awardee under the Environmental Excellence category.

KabaYan is the umbrella corporate social responsibility and community service program of the company in the areas of education, environment, community building and livelihood and emergency preparedness and disaster response.

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ACCORDING TO LETTER FROM EMBASSY OFFICIAL

'Ivler a US citizen'

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY has confirmed that Jason Ivler, who was earlier charged with the death of a Malacañang official's son, is an American citizen.

However, it did not say whether he moved to the United States long as his mother had claimed.

IVLER

Chief Insp. Reynaldo Rimando of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said that according to a letter from Bradley H. Wilde, Ivler has not communicated with the embassy since 2004.

Wilde is the chief of the citizenship and passport office of the US Embassy.

Wilde also said that they did not know that Ivler was in the country until they read in the newspapers about his alleged involvement in the shooting of Bryans Vickie Eliseo Jr., son of Presidential Chief of Staff Undersecretary Renato Eliseo Jr.

"The letter did not mention anything about Ivler's acceptance," Rimando said.

The police official, who is heading the investigation of the case, added that efforts were ongoing to arrest Ivler who seems been hiding right after the shooting incident.

"He is really elusive despite the fact that all branches of law enforcement agencies are out to get him," he admitted.

Rimando said they had received information that Ivler, who uses a motorcycle to get around and travels by himself, never stays in one place for more than 20 minutes.

"We have good information on the ground but before we can even reach the place [where he is reportedly staying], he has already left on board a motorcycle," he added.

WARN A45

Lim orders cops to secure protesters

By Tina G. Santos

A JOURNALISTS' GROUP WILL HOLD A rally in Mendiola next week to condemn the massacre in Maguindanao, which left a huge number of media practitioners dead.

In a meeting with Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, officials of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said the protest, scheduled on Dec. 9, will form part of the "International Day of Action" to be commemorated simultaneously worldwide by affiliates of the Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists and different media groups.

Lim, meanwhile, directed secretary to the mayor Eufracio Garaphin to coordinate with Manila Police District director, Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magbilog, so that security

(PA A2)

DENIAL "SELF-SERVING NEGATIVE EVIDENCE"

Ex-seaman gets life for stude's slay

By Julie M. Aurelio

A QUEZON CITY COURT has convicted a former seaman for allegedly shooting and killing the 18-year-old daughter of his intended "target."

Judge Rayner Vargas of Regional Trial Court Branch 219 sentenced the accused, Apolonio Ardo, to life imprisonment for the murder of Jan Ivy Vasquez in 2002.

The victim's family claimed the accused was reportedly a policeman who had been dismissed from the service.

Ardo, who was indicted for the death of Vasquez, allegedly originally wanted to kill Vasquez's father, Rolie, a cross-eyed man who was away from home when his daughter was shot.

The victim's 9-year-old brother positively identified Ardo in court as the person who shot his sister in the head as she was standing near the window of their house in Barangay Bantan Hills.

Damages

The court ordered the accused to pay the family P115,612.10 in damages. Vasquez was a college student at the time of her death.

In his decision, Vargas gave more weight to the boy's testimony than Ardo's denial that he had nothing to do with Vasquez's death.

"Children of tender mind are likely to be more observant of incidents which take place within their view than older persons, and their testimonies are likely more correct in detail than that of older persons," the court said.

The court noted that Vasquez's aunt, who only lived some doors also positively identified Ardo as the gunman and that another witness, a construction worker, heard the accused talk about killing the child to Vasquez.

Vargas added that the killing was considered murder because of the evident premeditation and planning of the crime, which ended up in the death of the young student.

"The accused's denial constituted self-serving negative evidence which can hardly be considered as overcoming a straightforward and credible positive eyewitness account," the court said.

Claims

The court also downplayed the accused's claims that Rolie Vasquez was his friend and that not once did their friendship turn sour for the accused to consider killing him.

"The accused merely denies the charge, although there was no ulterior motive during his testimony. There was even no denial that the accused was aware of the enmity of the victim's father," Vargas pointed out.

UP students hit police presence on campus

By Julie M. Aurelio

STUDENTS AND FACULTY OF the University of the Philippines in Quezon City yesterday denounced the "massive" movement of protesters holding a rally during the inauguration of a new building on Wednesday.

In a statement, the faculty, student and staff regents also criticized the presence of the Quezon City Police District during the rally.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was supposed to lead the inaugural of the Ernesto Tayao-Dalisay at the Acad Center, did not show up at the event.

The new building is the home of the center's 10,000 volume collection on Asian studies.

Protesters alleged they were manhandled and later arrested by policemen. The students were eventually released.

Three days, the height of the President's declaration of a state of national emergency in February 2006, there was no police presence on the campus in spite of the daily protests held in Diliman," said staff regent Gladdalin Cabrera.

The student added in a statement that this "gives the impression of martial law during the Marcos years that police were allowed on campus to conduct a crowd control operation.

Faculty Regent Judy Taguiwalo said Wednesday's deployment of the police was a violation of the university's policy.

The statement also criticized UP Diliman Chancellor Sergio Cao for tapping the police to conduct crowd control operations inside the campus, "thereby giving them (police) license to use violence against peaceful protesters inside the university."

Taguiwalo, Cabrera, and student regent Quirino Bravo called on the UP administration to assure its people to maintain the campus as haven for free assembly and expression.

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Lim orders cops ...

From page A11

would be provided to the officers who would be searching from the University of Santo Tomas on España Boulevard up to the foot of Quezon Bridge (Mendiola Bridge).

The source said he wanted to ensure that the rally would not be marred by any chaos, as what happened on the Ateneo campus of the Twitter07 of the Philippines the other day where several chalkboards were hurled when they thought it was a bomb scare.

Lim also offered to provide wheelchairs for elderly media members who wanted to join the protest but may be physically unable to endure the march.

To is by summoning the area of indignation against what happened in Maguindanao that police may be served the victims of the grisly mass murders," Lim said in the expressed support for the call of media unit for the arrested on independent commission on the Ampatuan massacre.

The MLIF for its part, promised to abide by the conditions set by Lim for the conduct of the rally.

Among others, the protestors are expected to commemorate the massacre victims and media workers with their nobody and chose. Graffiti, the defacing of walls, vandalism and all forms of damage to property are unacceptable, OK, as well as obstructing body vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

HOLIDAY CHEER
The facade of the Bonifacio Overseeing Pilipinas on Roxas Boulevard cheerfully towards motorists that the terrace is just a few days away.

MetroBriefs

Cop killed in mishap

A 29-year-old policeman was killed after he figured in an accident in Pasay City on Wednesday night. PO3 Ricardo Tarrel the Pasay Traffic Enforcement Unit said PO3 Lalaine Bucalocos Jr. of the Manila police was driving his motorcycle when he hit a plied box on the center island of the Roxas Boulevard-Gil Puyat Ave. The impact threw him off his motorcycle. He was rushed to Pasay City General Hospital but he died after several minutes.

Preliminary reports showed the victim may have been speeding. Tarrel said they would conduct further investigation to check if other vehicles had caused the accident.

Allison M. Lopez

Fake ink cartridges seized in Binondo

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) reported yesterday the seizure of some P1 million worth of fake Epson ink cartridges during a raid on several stores in Binondo, Manila. Agents of the NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD) collective Office Middle and Paper Sales at 424 F. T. Yechengco St., the Metro School and Office Supplies at 472 F. T. Yechengco St., the S.O. Realm Stationery and General Merchandise at this 3rd floor of the Pacific Building at the corner of Benito Perez and Padilla Streets, and the Jose Luna Stationery and General Merchandise store at the 3rd floor of the Jose Luna Building at 668 Jose Luna St. Seized from the stores were 1,100 fake cartridges bearing the Epson trademark.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Defensor mum on issues hounding GMA

By Leila B. Salaverria

FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CHIEF of Staff Mike Defensor, once described as President Macapagal-Arroyo's fair-haired boy, has been taking pains to distance himself from all issues.

In yesterday's News Forum, Defensor refused to comment on issues hounding his former boss, particularly her decision to run for Congress.

"It's better that focus in Lakas should answer that ... the President has her own spokesperson. She has her own party matters. We give that right to party mates and the spokespersons," he said, referring to the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD party.

When asked during the News Forum why he was not running under Lakas, Defensor said his decision is not for anyone who formed rather but.

By first time, he added, the ruling party had already endorsed him to run as re-elected with the Nationalist People's Coalition but they needed he Bolding Bay. Mary Ann Santos as their common candidate's.

Defensor is running under the People's Reform Party of his mind, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago.

However, he said he was a guest candidate of Sen. Manuel Villar's Nacionalista Party as invited former President Joseph Estrada's Pwersang ng Masang Filipino (PMF) since his campaign team, Alko Mobender, was the PMF's official candidate for vice mayor.

Pressed on who he was backing for president in 2010, Defensor replied, "This time I am candidate of Villar. In the case of Mrs. it's Erap."

On a reporter's observation that neither he nor his running mate were affiliated with Lakas, he said that politics in the local level was like Vinegaroo, "a dish in which different vegetables are mixed together."

Defensor said civil political parties sometimes hold common candidacies by local posts although this was not the case when their national positions were involved.

In 2007, Defensor ran for senator under Lakas but lost.

He said that before joining Lakas, he was with the Liberal Party for a long time—way back when, in the late 60s, all its members could fit into a Volkswagen.

According to Defensor, the LP has become "topheavy (unbalanced)."

The LP is holding its first "Batasik" Tandem for mayor and Joy Belmonte-Almoranza, the daughter of Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte, for vice mayor.

Reuters and Sharon Jackson were members of Lakas before they moved to LP.

Defensor held several posts when he was with the administration. Aside from being the President's chief of staff, he also served as environment secretary and was appointed head of the task force on the Transcentral El of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

In October last year, he was named acting chair of the Philippine Sinks and Railways.

'Ivler a US citizen'

From page A11

The National Bureau of Investigation, Highway Patrol Group and Criminal Investigation and Detective Group have joined the search for Ivler who has a cash reward of P500,000 for his arrest.

Rhoda B. was shot to death with a .40 caliber pistol after his Toyota Land Cruiser almost collided with the Honda CRV being driven by Ivler at the corner of Broi Soriano and Granada Streets in Quezon City on Nov. 28.

The night before the victim's son died, another motorist, Menandro Cruz, 47, told the police that Ivler had pointed a gun at him during a traffic altercation.

Ivler also has an unfavorable warrant of arrest for the death of Nestor Perez, a 19-year-old motorcycle rider, in a vehicular accident in 2004.

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Honduras Congress rejects return of ousted leader

TEGUCIGALPA—HONDURAN lawmakers late Wednesday roundly rejected the reinstatement of ousted President Manuel Zelaya during a heated debate heralding defeat of the June 28 coup which polarized the nation.

The vote came as Honduran ...

ZELAYA

Supreme Court, business leaders and the military, had backed Zelaya's expulsion over his plans to change the constitution, which they saw as a bid to remain in power.

Before Wednesday's vote, lawmakers had received advice from the attorney general and the Supreme Court, which has said that criminal charges against Zelaya will remain.

Zelaya, who suffered from splits within his Liberal Party which has a majority in Congress but a deeply divided core has swung to the left under the influence of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

The United States, close business partners and donors, and the European Union, also a key donor, said they saw the weekend polls as an important first step forward out of the crisis, but many in Latin America, starting with pamphleteer Brasil, said they wanted to whitewash the coup.

Rights groups said the crackdown never ceased by the lack of international consensus, and slammed a military crackdown on journalists and activists since the coup.

The organization of American States (OAS), which suspended Honduras after the coup but has been divided over the crisis, was due to consider a response to the elections on Friday. AFP

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Pentagon e-mails suggest US distrust of Canada

WASHINGTON—HOW MUCH does the US government really trust Canada? Maybe less than you think.

Espionage warnings from the Defense Department counted as international scuttlebutt a few years ago, one report of a spokesman using radio frequency transmitters, until they were debunked. The subject was Canada, which has been the quarry in Canada. But of the height of the mystery senior Pentagon officials speculated whether Canadians were involved in the spy cases.

"I don't think it is an issue of the Canadian Embassy like bad guys," the Pentagon's counterintelligence chief wrote in an exchange of e-mails obtained this week. Not three years, who knows?

In the e-mails, released under the US Freedom of Information Act with names blacked out but job titles disclosed, Pentagon officials questioned why they should order military officers in the US Northern Command, who regularly met Canadian counterparts about duties, be Cooked it inside together government meeting rooms. The rooms are known as secure compartmentalized information facilities, or SIFFs.

"Isn't the Canadian press consulting that should be briefed in Northern since the Canadians at is their SIFF?" asked the Pentagon's deputy director for counterintelligence oversight, in e-mails marked "[name blacked out]."

"Good point," replied the Pentagon's acting director for counterintelligence. "It is possible that DSS (the US Defense Security Service) sent their report to Northern. Then again, I don't think it is an issue of the Canadians being the bad guys, as this is quite a few years old."

Canada is among the closest of US allies, its continental northern neighbor, and is the leading oil supplier for the United States. The intelligence services of the two countries are interwoven tightly and routinely share sensitive secrets. President Barack Obama chose Canada as the destination of his first foreign trip, to underscore what he described as the two countries' long-standing and growing friendship.

In sensational warnings that eventually publicly in late 2006 and early 2007, the Pentagon's Defense Security Service and other officials in the intelligence community found planted on US Army contractors with classified security clearances cast at least three separate occasions between October 2005 and January 2006 to the extensions revealed through Canada.

In January 2007, the government abruptly reversed itself and said the warnings were not true. The case remained a mystery until months later, when it was learned that the flap had been caused by suspicions over the odd-looking Canadian "pennies" quarter with a bright red flower. The often-colored 25-cent piece features floral images of a puppy—Canada's flower of remembrance—mixed on a maple leaf.

What explosive connection believed to be "counterfeiting" or the coin actually was a protective coating the Royal Canadian Mint applied to prevent the pennies' red color from rubbing off. AP

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The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gozo

Obama hints at expanded campaign in Pakistan

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA FOCUSED his speech on Afghanistan. He left much unsaid about Pakistan, where the main terrorists he is targeting are located, but where he can send no troops.

Obama could not be very specific about his Pakistan strategy his advisers assembled Monday evening. Of operations there are classified, most run by the CIA. Any overt US presence would only fuel anti-Americanism in a country that wants sharply to carry out a terrible strike against extremism than kills civilians as well, and that fears that America is playing to turn its government and sides to nuclear weapons.

So quietly, Obama has authorized an expansion of the war in Pakistan as well—if only he can get it to work, divided, suspicious Pakistani government to agree to the terms.

In recent months, in addition to providing White House officials with classified assessments about Afghanistan, the CIA delivered a plan for widening the campaign of strikes against militants by drone aircraft in Pakistan, sending additional spies there and creating a White House commission to bulk up the CIA's budget for operations inside the country.

The question about Obama's Pakistan strategy is whether the new commitments of troops and resources are still mainly aside America cuts at a time of an evolving terrorist threat. Obama insisted that was his central focus.

"This is the epicenter of the violent extremism practiced by al-Qaida," he said to the cadets at West Point, speaking of both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the nearby border area between the two that offers refuge to extremists of many stripes. The region was the birthplace of the 9/11 attacks, he said, and "it is here here that new attacks are being plotted as I speak." Many times in the speech he returned to that threat, saying it was what made this war different from Vietnam.

And he referenced another threat, one that focuses the attention of Obama's national security team daily, but which it speaks about rarely.

"The stakes are even higher within a nuclear-armed Pakistan, because we know that al-Qaida and other extremists seek nuclear weapons, and we have every reason to believe that they would use them," he said.

Obama's decision to raise the nuclear specter was notable because a succession of US officials have publicly stated recently that the Pakistani arsenal is secure. In private, however, they have commissioned new intelligence studies on how vulnerable Pakistani warheads and laboratories would be if insurgents made greater inroads, with one official saying recently: "It is the scenario we spend the most time thinking about." NYT

WORLDBRIEFS

Lawmakers to investigate gate-crashing at White House

WASHINGTON—Congress is beginning the first public questioning Thursday into how a couple were able to get through a security and crash a White House state dinner for India's prime minister. Secret Service Director Mark Sullivan has agreed to testify before the Homeland Security Committee of the House of Representatives about the embarrassing incident that has captured the attention of Americans for almost a week. Sullivan has admitted the security breach was the fault of his agency, which is responsible for President Barack Obama's personal security. Salahuddin Salahuddin and Michaele Salahi, who attended Obama's first state dinner, honoring Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The Salahis have been asked to appear before the committee to explain what happened. As of late Wednesday, the attention-hungry couple has not responded to the invitation. AP

Fort Hood suspect charged with attempted murder of 32

FORT WORTH, Texas—An Army psychiatrist who may face the death penalty after the mass shooting at Fort Hood was charged on Wednesday with 32 counts of attempted premeditated murder relating to the scores of soldiers and two civilian police officers injured in the attack, military officials said. Maj. Nidal Hasan has already been charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder after the Nov. 5 rampage in a building at the Texas Army post where soldiers most go before being deployed. Witnesses said he jumped on a desk and shouted "Allahu Akbar!"—Arabic for "God is great!" Army officials have said he was armed with two pistols, one a semi-automatic capable of firing up to 20 rounds without reloading. AP

NY robber gets 75 years for mugging 101-year-old

NEW YORK—A New York City man who mugged a 101-year-old woman on her way to church has been sentenced to 75 years in prison. Queens resident Jack Rhodes was sentenced on Wednesday after being convicted of violently attacking three women, including Rose Moral, now 103. Authorities argued the 61-year-old Rhodes targeted them of the women because of their age, a violation of the state Hate Crimes Act. The loan provides for harsher sentences. A surveillance camera recorded the 2007 assault on Moral. It showed her using a walker to leave her apartment building when she was set upon. Moral suffered a fractured cheekbone and bruises. Her attacker got away with $33. AP

Experts: Man controlled robotic hand with thoughts

ROME—An Italian who lost his left forearm in a car crash has been successfully linked to a robotic hand, allowing him to feel sensations in the artificial limb and control it with his thoughts, scientists said. During a one-month experiment conducted last year, 26-year-old Pierpaolo Petruzziello fell like his lost arm had grown back again, although he was only controlling a robotic hand that was not even attached to his body. "It's a matter of mind, of concentration," Petruzziello said. "When you think of it, your mind doesn't have a lot of functions inside." Though similar experiments have been successful before, the European scientists who led the project say this was the first time a patient has been able to make such complex movements using brain-electro-control-a biomedical-term. Nerve connections to his nervous system. The challenge for scientists now will be to create a system that can connect a patient's nervous system and a prosthetic limb for years, not just a month. AP

Indonesia's richest double wealth in a year—Forbes

JAKARTA—Indonesia's 40 richest people have doubled their wealth in the past year to $42 billion, mainly on the back of commodities like coal and palm oil, Forbes magazine reported on Thursday. The elite club has surpassed its previous total-wealth record, set in 2007, by $2 billion, despite the financial crisis which swept the world last year, the magazine said on its website. Of the 12 main Asia-Pacific economies surveyed, Forbes said only China's wealthiest saw a better improvement, rising by a combined $138 billion from $52 billion. AP

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SPORTS

NBA infamy: Torn Nets plunge to 0-18

Pacquiao, Arum plan M'weather super tiff

By Cordell P. Tapus and Associated Press

TOP RANK PROMOTER BOB ARUM ARRIVED IN MANILA YESterday to collaborate with Manny Pacquiao clientele of the postponed super fight pitting the Filipino ring icon against American Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Pacquiao's legal advisor Jong Uson, told the Inquirer yesterday that the pound-for-pound king, fresh from an impressive 12th-round knockout of Puerto Rican Miguel Cotto for his seventh weight division title, was scheduled to meet Arum either "tonight (last night) or tomorrow (today)."

"It's obviously over here to talk in Manny" Arum told Lance Pugmire of the Los Angeles Times in an article in yesterday's issue. "At this point, I've got to find out what my fighter wants to do."

The Associated Press had reported that the fight scattered has been approved by Mayweather's representatives, but the boxer himself has yet to sign it.

Arum was to present the proposal to Pacquiao, but there are no journalists he will agree.

Internet reports Wednesday said the bout will be scheduled on March 13.

The proposed date, however, does not sit well with Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach.

In a separate interview with Pugmire, Roach proposed either 1 abandonment for his injured wrist and Mayweather, who came out of a two-year layoff to beat Juan Manuel Marquez last September.

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Dr. David Mallozzi, an expert in non-surgical permanent hair restoration from West LA Medical and Skincare, explains, "There are many causes of thinning hair. But the most common type of hairloss is male pattern baldness or Androgenetic Alopecia where dihydrotestosterone (DHT) attacks the hair follicles resulting in progressive thinning of hair. This can lead to bald patches and miniaturization or shortening of hairs."

On the right treatment as soon as you notice signs of hairloss. "LLLT used by Revage Laser Hair Recovery is the only technology that has been proven effective to stimulate hair production through biostimulation and neovascularization. Biostimulation is the enhancement of the body to make hair grow more while neovascularization is the formation of new blood vessels to feed the hair and reduce hair follicles for more hair production," Dr. Mallozzi says.

Other products or remedies only open up blood vessels to improve blood flow but not to form new ones. Once you stop using them, hair starts to fall or thin out in 3-6 months. So you're back to your old problem.

But with Revage Laser Hair Recovery, in just 3 months of treatment, there has been an 87% success rate in stopping hairloss progression. After 6 months, an increase in hair volume could be noticed. In one year depending on the severity of hairloss, there'd be a 50% or more increase in hair volume with absolutely no surgery.

"At Svenson, they have customized hair recovery programs that are combined with Revage to get even better, faster results. With these highly trained technicians, you can be assured of good service and well-supervised treatment," Dr. Mallozzi adds.

Revage Laser Hair Recovery is exclusively available at Svenson. Call now at 892-HAIR (4247) and book your FREE private consultation.

Eagles, Stags seek PCCL Final 4

By Cedrik P. Tupas

ATENEO'S UAAP CHAMPION EAGLES and San Sebastian's NCAA titlist Stags try to move closer to a dream showdown when they clash with separate rivals today in the quarterfinals of the Philippine Collegiate Champions League at the Tiendesitas Sports Avenue in Pasig.

The Eagles battle the University of Santo Tomas Tigers at 2 p.m. in a rematch of their meeting in the UAAP Final Four, which Ateneo won convincingly.

The Stags clash at 4 p.m. with the Letran Knights, one of only two teams who beat them in the Aftab NCAA! Season.

Ateneo and San Sebastian are seeking to join Far Eastern U and San Beda in the semifinals on Monday.

The winner of the Ateneo-UST clash will meet San Beda while FEU awaits the survivor of the San Sebastian-Letran duel.

The Tamaraws prevailed over University of the East, 96-85, in their quarterfinal meeting last Saturday, while the Lions held off the Mapua Cardinals, 77-75.

Letran stunned defending champion La Salle, 83-72, to reach the quarterfinals (See picture below). Mapua finished out Lyceum, 75-63, in the first round.

San Sebastian is coming off a tough 76-68 overtime victory over University of Santo Tomas in Davao City last Monday.

UST also advanced at the expense of Jose Rizal U, 64-62.

Popps show in Founders Cup

TEAM POPPS' COUPLE, PHOUPHANH AND Christine, led their game partners to victory while the King Budweiser-John Pupa tandem rallied to make the low gross plate in the 13th Founders Cup, the member-sponsored tournament of the Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Phouphanh and Dennis Bejar won the overall title after their counterpart shot two under with Christine and her tournament Rita Hasan at 129 points.

Phouphanh and Bejar made 79 points at the Palmer course, then carded 50 at the Player to pass the field of 666 golfers in the event presented by Coca-Cola.

Christine and Rita settled for the Class A title, edging Vicente Romano III and Luigi Taborda by one.

Sarbanes and Papa rallied with a 7-under football gross of 43 on the second day to beat the Romano-Taborda pair by two and clinch the low gross team trophy.

Members currently next to Dan Malcolm were Hendrik Tan in Class B, Angelito Colayco And Rodriguez in Class C and Julio Javier B. Alfredo Cabochi in Class D.

Cesar Alonso and Lito Castrillo topped the sponsors division.

Beermen eye No. 9 vs SLR

By Mauro R. Cuzilla

SAN MIGUEL TRIES TO EXTEND THEIR SPELL Philippine Cup's longest winning streak to nine games today when the Beermen drag it out with the Sta. Lucia Realtors at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

Game time is 7:30 p.m. with everything pointing to another victory for the Beermen, who have been invincible and unforgiving for close to two months now.

The mighty Glenders, depleted and all, aim to pin a seventh straight loss on struggling Realtor Rudy Hatfield in 5 p.m. curtain-raiser.

The Beermen weighed all their past eight foes, with Danger Ilang, the latest to fall, 100-93, at the Tiwala Arena in Pasig on Sunday.

But Miguel will come into this game also burning on 88-80 whupping of the Realtors in their first meeting at the Victorias Sports Center in Negros Occidental.

Arwind Santos also actually announced his coming as the new cornerstone of the valiantlers Ian Miguel squad in that game where he

shot 21 points and grabbed 13 rebounds.

He now leads the statistical points race after the first round.

The Realtors will also have to stop Brandon Woudstra, Lordy Tugade and Dennis Onla.

Rudy Hatfield, the MVP in 2008, and Ryan Reyes will again carry the fight for the Realtors, who are mired in the lower half of the pack with a 3-4 card.

Glenders, meanwhile, will likely still be without reigning MVP Jayjay Helterbrand and gunslinger Mark Caguioa (who are both injured).

Celso Cruz will also be out because of a fractured finger, leaving the quarterbacking chores to former MVP Johnny Abarrientos.

The Gin Kings are coming off a 114-103 victory over Coca-Cola last week.

P' BELENCION of Letran runs into the tough defense of La Salle's Jeo Hangsan in a recent PCCL game won by the Knights. ALBERT ORBETA FILE

Alcantara marches on; Patrimonio gets the boot

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FRANCES CASEY ALCANTARA SMOOTHLY pulled through Sue Anne Clarice Barcinonia's failed to join him in the semifinals of the Philippine International Junior Week 2 tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Alcantara cruised within two sets of hacking-back titles here by outclassing Japan's Kachiyo Mizutani, 6-4, 6-0, to barge into the semifinals of the boys' singles.

"I hope I can continue playing well," said Alcantara, a 17-year-old Cagayan de Oro native who broke into the limelight early this year by winning the boys' doubles crown with a Taiwanese partner at the Australian Open.

Alcantara again became the lone Filipino standing as Aiesa Fontemayor crashed to fourth seed and last week's girls' singles champion Tzu-Hsin of China, 6-2, 6-0.

Alcantara next faces another Japanese, eighth seed Raishi Uchida, who outlasted Thai No. 3 Nemanee Kaichaengsee, 2-6, 7-5, 7-6 (2).

The young Filipino Davis Cupper downed Yoshihito Nishioka, also of Japan, 7-5, 6-0, to capture the title in a contest last Sept. 27.

Alcantara moved close against Mizutani, committing four double faults that allowed the Japanese to forge a 3-3 tie in the first set.

But the Filipino found his groove just in time, taking three of the next four games to wrap up the set, before completely outclassing the Japanese in the second set.

Former Olympian Cecilio Seriguesa overpowered Nishioka, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, and will meet Israel Shelpuk of Israel, who downed fourth seed Thai Pimnarat Pongthanin, 6-1, 6-4.

Tino will battle second-seeded Japanese Yuichi Ito, who eliminated China's Zhao Qianquian, 7-5, 6-4, in the girls' semifinals.

Chinese top seed Hu Liu and Rona Lomas of South Korea meet in the other Final Four match. Hu rolled back Anna Tyulpa of Russia, 1-6, 6-4, 6-2, while Lomas ousted Belgium's Justine de Sutter, 6-2, 3-6, 7-5.

Angping will be happy with 32 SEA Games golds

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THEY PROMISED 64 GOLD MEDALS but Philippine Sports Commission chairman Harry Angping said he'd be happy if the athletes could muster up with just half of that number in the Southeast Asian Games starting Wednesday in Laos.

"I'd be happy if we win half of the number of golds they promised because that would be 32 golds from 231 athletes," said Angping. "In the last SEA Games we won 41 while sending 600 athletes."

He also promised to reward the athletes with P500,000 for each gold medal during a victory motorcade.

Wednesday night held in Oranjestad and Quirinada streets in the second district of Manila, which Angping used to represent in Congress.

The victory package consists of P100,000 from the Sports Commission, P100,000 from the POC coffers and another P100,000 from what the PSC chief said were "Friends of Angping."

Some 150 athletes and officials attended the lively gathering where the 168 Games host, when asked how many golds they expect to win, announced Angping they are good for 42.

The POC contingent is made up of 231 athletes who will compete in 22 events. They are gunning to improve on RP's recent finish ever of ninth overall in 2007 in Thailand, two years after bagging the overall championship in Manila.

Angping also allowed athletes' bats were the winners of the national pool starting next year.

"Instead, we will re-evaluate the athletes," he told the athletes. "The most deserving can get as much as P50,000 a month in allowances and go for international exposure on a quarterly basis."

Angping also promised to double the incentives for the Asian Games in Guangzhou next year.

At present, Republic Act No. 9064 provides P1 million for an Asiad bronze gold medal.

A live band serenaded the athletes, among them Gilflash Depaula Djanga Bustamante and Ronnie Alcaide, driver Shella Perez, wrestler Jason Pi Tibon and Muaythai boxer Jessica Asian long jump champ Marestella Torres and taekwondo jin Clemente Go.

In a gesture of unity, athletes light red candles at the lighter saver out while pop star Erik Santos belted his hit song "This is the Moment."

After the party, athletes queued up to get their allowances of $100 each. They never given an additional $100 yesterday as advance bonus.

SENIORS FIL-AM

Mendoza elevates Maxima/Komatsu

BAGUIO CITY—FIFTH MAN Freddie Mendoza's 27 did not count but it proved the most decisive score as Maxima/Komatsu beat Cainta Ayala Hay to reach the semifinals to win the Seniors Fil Oldtimers Invitational championship.

Maxima/Komatsu, composed mostly of players from last year's champion, Golden Gen, rallied from three points down at the Camp John Hay courts with 12:25 to go in the home team after four rounds.

Both finished with 440 points but Maxima/Komatsu had a higher five-player total on the final day of the three-day four-round format.

Eduardo Sison scored 34 for the champion while Pharoe Delos Santos scored 32, Antonio Hernandez had 31 and Amy Santamaria carded 28 under the PM, Stubbs-Bed scoring system.

With Mendoza's 27, Maxima/Komatsu warmed up with 152 to the crunch against John Ilay's 148 on the 21s of Buck Jung, wen and Fred Packett, the 30s of Bong Mandapat and Clyde Catherine and the 28s of team skipper Nilson Falao, who did not count.

"The golf god was on our side," said Bayani Buenaville jr., team skipper of Maxima/Komatsu.

It was especially painful for Camp John Hay schmit Jun on his home courts.

Over at the Baguio Country Club, CJH got a revenge of sorts by winning the "Ace" Division with 504 points over MWP and Ayala Batong Gas.

MWP scored 491 points on the last day for 3rd while Ayala Batong Gas closed out with 467 to settle for third with 347.

CJH's Rudy Lacbay and Ong Shiao Kyu both scored 23 points while Ong Bong-lung and Bob Bienvenu scored 17 each.

Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Side event for ABL fans

THE PHILIPPINE PATRIOTS shoot for a sixth straight win against Indonesian club Satria Muda Britama at 4 p.m. tomorrow in an hour Basketball League game that has been sprinkled with an added treat for fans at the PICC Pasay U Arena in East Asia.

Powered by sublegate dandy-men Elmer Espiritu and Nonoy Baclao, the Patriots are showing the way in the six-nation tourney with a 5-1 record.

As a way of thanking its fans, the ABL will hold a free three-point shootout. Patriots team manager Erick Arcilla said.

Boston sportscaster Bert Allen Tirona and 28 contestants will be randomly selected from the crowd.

The winning fan will win a trip to Malaysia on Jan. 9 to watch the Philippine Patriots play the Kuala Lumpur Dragons. Cedrik P. Tupas

THREE-PEAT! The Bulldogs of National University celebrate their victory in the season first Mike 3 on 3 Jam 2 Warrior Championship with Brunch Garner La Salle King Archer JV Cedric Mhe sampling champion Yeshe Pajarillo, Mike 3-for-3 consumer marketing executive Karl Villegas, Nicole JeVP and Mike sports events executive Pat Gee-ong, tournament director Butch Arevalo and former Ateneo King Eagle Chris Tiu.

'Sugupaan' Big Event today in Pasay

THE 2009 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON COMES TO A CLIMACTIC finish today with the closing of the Pasay 'Sugupaan' Big Event in Bldg Derby at the Pasay City Football Field. The event is a mixed sports affair organized by the city's big three barbers. "Sugupaan" derby heads Patrick Antonio and Eric Jose Rosa. "Sing sessions or no-net singfests will be held at today."

Some of the highs will spice up the clashes among the country's top flight amateur sportsbarbers.

By Top Choice of SLP

The Great Wall of España

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Sev Sarmenta

WHEN THE UST WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL team decides to shut down opponents, they can do so in a number of ways.

In the current second conference finals of the division's A League, the Tigresses did it by blocking and delivering lethal blows when it mattered.

They used their dominating height to the team by scoring 16 points off blocks in the two duels that have their swaps. That's impressive when you consider that UST made its defense an offensive option.

When their blocking is in place, they have opposing hitters to either shoot into the block or into the floor finally.

Adamson had very limited scoring options in Angela Benting and Gil Gayoba and when they were contained, the rest of the Tigresses' game fell into place.

* * *

UST must have a winning coach/line assistant who is in Uganda because they never run out of tall and athletic women to carry the future of the blocking chores.

With its lanky frontline of conference and finals MVP Aiza Maizo-Mantua Onti, Shelbie Jennings and game player Semarose Hapon provides [illegible] and Adamson would not capitalize on. UST reared back and came back that set and the title.

* * *

Coach Shaq de los Santos has now accumulated the title "arsenal" of UST's first V League title although he acknowledges that Singapore Sea Meets as the architect of this dominance in the tournament. De los Santos has some two hitters with deft coaching moves that harness the virtuous, strengths and weaknesses of his team.

Jennings is the hitter who has been the good natured cop game then makes play on the bench.

When her is disappointed with their game, he allows his assistants to do the talking, hoping that another voice will knock some loss into them. He is also the one who knows when to change things because he's aware of the immense talent he works with.

All it needs is a little cajoling and reminding to keep the team in sync.

De los Santos's V League triumph extended the depths of success going into the UAAP season.

The most notable blow out on the block is Shaqia Amanda, a product of the UST high school program. In the second game, Amanda was a viable offensive option, scoring six points. On Wednesday's impressive Nothing block of the UST wall in the future.

So's shining World Cup stint ends

HAUTVILLIERS, FRANCE—WESLEY SO'S bid for a hat trick in the 2009 World Chess Cup finally came to an end Wednesday.

Filipino Grandmaster So, dubbed by the foreign media here as the tournament's "biggest sensation," lost all his three rapid tiebreak matches to Russian GM Vladimir Malakhov in their fourth-round duel and bowed out of contention at the city's Centre d'Arts.

The 22nd-seeded Malakhov (2h 2567) snapped up the clash, 4-1.

The 16-year-old Filipino, whose strong performance during the preregistration classification competition netted him recognition with former world champion Anatoly Karpov, failed to shake off the more-experienced Malakhov and settled to a down-to-the-wire finish.

He stunned Azerbaijan GM Teimour Radjabov world championship finalist GM Vassily Ivanchuk of Ukraine and defending champion GM Gata Kamsky of the United States in the first three rounds to reach the last 16.

He earned US$18,000 (about P1.46 million) in prize money by reaching the round-of-16.

"Children's time is over. Now baby talk is over," said a note in the website.

The two other remaining young talents—GM Fabiano Caruana of Italy and Maxim Vachier-Lagrave of France—were also eliminated by Azerbaijan GM Vugar Gashimov and top seed Boris Gelfand of Israel, respectively.

Also making it in the last eight were Russians GM Dmitry Jakovenko, who ousted compatriot GM Alexander Grischuk, 5-3, and Ukrainian GM Ruslan Ponomariov, who edged French GM Etienne Bacrot, 3.5-2.5.

Already in the quarterfinals are GM Boris Gelfler of Russia, who eliminated GM Alexei Shirov of Spain, 3.5-2.5; GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, who ousted GM Viktor Laznicka, 1.5-0.5; and GM Sergey Karjakin of Ukraine, who dumped GM Nikita Vitiugov of Russia, 1.5-.5.

TIED! Philippines' Efren "Bata" Reyes and Bulakan derek team the horse crowd after clinching the crown. KODA SOTO

WORLD MIXED DOUBLES

Efren, Rubilen get the job done

By Jose Navarro

THE LAST THING RUBILEN AMIT WANTS IS to give Efren "Bata" Reyes reason to double her ability on the pool table.

Amit didn't disappoint again last night, backing up Reyes with superb pocketing and positioning as Team Philippines moved down South Korea's Oliver Villanueva and Mark Rasch, 9-7, to rule the 2009 World Mixed Doubles Classic at Nueve City in Libis, Quezon City.

"I guess getting the advice of Tata Efren and following my instincts on those important shots proved to be the key to our victory," said Amit, the reigning World Global Games champion who looks up to Reyes as a mentor and fellow cueFilipino.

After sweeping on their last three breaks, Reyes and Amit snapped the Koreans in an intense exchange of pinpoint shots in the 13th rack, with the Filipinos pocketing the decisive break when Park expected the 3-ball.

Team Philippines cleaned up to reach the fall, 8-7, then went on to wrap up the $6,000 purse.

Lee Vera Cortes and Filipino-American Marielle Lorenzo of Philippines R subdued Taiwan's Hsiu Jung-mei and Russia Andreal, 7-3, to bag the $1,500 third prize. Indonesia and Andonesia pocketed $1,000 for landing fourth.

Japan's Hiroto Kojkata and Kiwi Ellis secured fifth place after drowning dampeons Akane Yui Bowring and Asty Chua, 9-3, in the event supported by Dragon Promotions, Pajero Sports, SBS CBN Sports and ESPN Star Sports.

Reyes needs a 3-3 deficit to tie the match, 4-4.

Don Enrico-Ibarra Gold Cup duel up

By Mecang R. Castillo

THE RIVALRY BETWEEN DON ENrico and Dinon Ibin another high this Sunday when the south-based Bacoor dog it out again for the most coveted prized on the horseracing calendar—the Presidential Gold Cup—at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

Don Enrico, son of former superboss Mind Blower, has a 2-1 record over Dinon in their head-to-head duels that season, and the versatile horse bred by Hermie Esguerra is again favored as the logical top choice owing to its superior fitness and consistency.

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, headed by chair Margie "Mona" Alo, is seeking a P2.25-million pot, with P1.8 million going to the winner of the grueling 2,000-meter race.

Ferdinand Raquel rescues Don Enrico yet again, while Kelvin Abobo handles defending champion Bunny, who missed sweeping the Triple Crown two years ago because of a serious threatening leg injury before returning last year to win this event.

Others in the compact field are Jessed O' Mia Dream Supreme, Dancinlongdong and Shining Prince, a long shot who could benefit greatly if the favorites decide to dog it out for the lead early.

John Alvin Guce rides Jessed O' Mia, John Gonbay will be Dream Supreme's partner, Louie Bolleta skippers Dancinlongdong while Jessie B. Guce handles Shining Prince.

Don Enrico, out of stakes see Esguerra, lost Run-In in the Hill Sweepstakes Cup and in the Gomez Stakes 2, while Dinon's only victory coming in the Philippine Commissioner's Cup.

Pacquiao, Arum plan Mayweather super tiff

From page B2F

"Match 13 is too far a horserace," Roach said. "Manny has a broken [right] metatarsal [bone] in the [mid-]fight. "[T]his to have some time. I hope the fight happens, yes, but I want us to be in best shape."

Manny believes he should get a 60-40 [purse] split, too, because he did better in pay-per-view than Mayweather this year. Manny's the bigger draw."

Pacquiao's Nov. 14 demolition of Cotto drew 1.25 million PPV buys, while Mayweather's September fight against Juan Manuel Marquez attracted 1.1 million.

Observers say Arum's ancient indicates that the megafight of 147 pounds is moving forward.

The fight was originally projected for May, but Pacquiao's bid for Congress forced promoters to move it forward to March. The elections are in May, and Pacquiao wanted to beat home to campaign.

If the fight is approved, there would likely be a Jan. 11 press conference in New York to announce it. The bout would be the earliest ever.

Representatives of the Superdome in New Orleans and the new Dallas Cowboys' stadium have expressed interest in hosting the fight, along with the MGM Grand Hotel-casino in Las Vegas, where the fighters have fought their biggest fights.

Ace Hardware Opens
at SM City Rosario

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These set of tools from Stanley make great repair helpers and gifts for the Holidays

Portable Power Station and Air

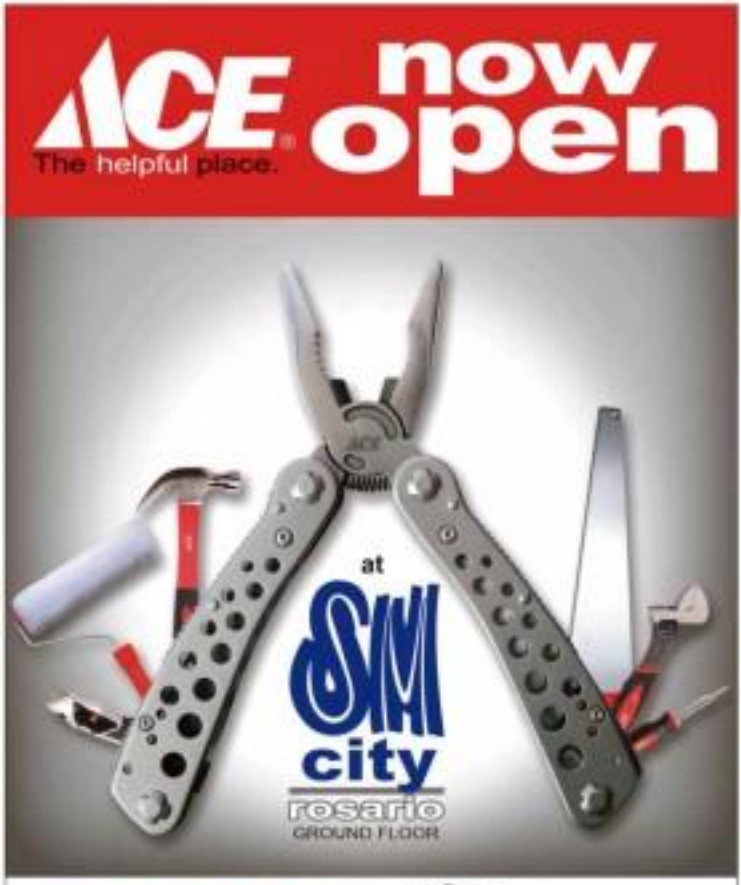
The new ACE Hardware store at SM City Rosario is a one-stop shop for the latest home improvement solutions. The 600 square-meter store is located at the mall's second level, and like all other ACE Hardware stores worldwide, is a DIY haven for fix-its, clean-ups, and do it yourself projects.

Like all other ACE Hardware stores worldwide, the new store in Rosario has an exciting selection of paints and sundries, electrical and plumbing equipment, hardware materials and power tools, building materials, outdoor equipment, storage solutions, and items for the car and house.

And while shopping at SM City Rosario, you can check out ACE's Holiday Gifts Suggestions promotion, which will be ongoing until November 30. You can get great savings and discounts on selected items, and earn extra rewards points.

Moreover, you can join in an exciting raffle promotion sponsored by Firefly. Every P500 single or accumulated purchase until December 31 entitles you to a raffle coupon and a chance to win one of two Honda Wave 100 Motorcycles. You can also double your chances of winning with your SM Prestige Card, SM Advantage Card, and EDC Rewards Card.

Shop for Christmas at the new ACE Hardware store at SM City Rosario, and at all other stores located at SM Makati, SM Cubao, and at SM Supermalls nationwide.



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Lito Riad O. Marcelo • Associate Editor Corres S. Mariano

BUSINESS

First Pacific hikes stake in Philex to 40.7%

Spends P9.5B to buy 9.2% block from Ongpin, DBP

IN THIS ISSUE

- **IBM pouring** investments into RP /B5
- **'09 corn output seen** growing despite typhoons /B6
- **US recovery gaining** momentum /B7
- **BCDA opens bidding** for Jusmag property /B10

By Doris C. Dumlao and Rica T. Olchondra

FIRST PACIFIC CO. LTD. OF HONG KONG HAS AGREED TO ACquire a 9.2-percent block in Philex Mining Corp. from a group led by former trade minister Roberto V. Ongpin, building up its stake to 40.7 percent and cementing its position as the single most influential stockholder in the country's biggest and most profitable mining firm.

First Pacific managing director Manuel V. Pangilinan announced in Hong Kong the purchase by Philippine unit Two Rivers Pacific Holdings Corp. of 451 million shares in Philex for P9.5 billion. This translates to P21 a share, a record high for Philex, which will be paid in a combination of cash and credit.

Ongpin will sell a 7.4-percent stake through three companies—Goldenrock Corp., Sunnie Corp. and Elkhound Resources Inc. Joining him in the block sale are state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines (1.2 percent) and Philex chief executive Walter Brown (0.1 percent). The deal is targeted for closing through a special block sale at the Philippine Stock Exchange on Dec. 7, subject to approval by the board of the listed miner.

Prior to this transaction, Ongpin—who sits as vice chair in the mining company—was also

FIRST /B2

Gov't defers auction of Tokyo property lease

By Ramon FW. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE HAS DEferred the auction for the 30-year lease of the government's Fujimi property in Tokyo as a group of ambassadors asked the Supreme Court to stop the proceeding.

But Finance Undersecretary Estela V. Bautista told reporters that the postponement had nothing to do with the petition for a temporary restraining order.

The deadline for the submission of bids was scheduled for today, with three Japanese companies expected to take part.

Bautista, who chairs the DOF privatization office's BAC (bids and awards committee), said there were some "technical matters" in the bid procedures that the committee wanted to address.

She did not elaborate, but said the processing of the bidding was continuing as long as there was no TRO issued.

Former ambassador Jose P. Laurel IV, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and the Philippine Ambassadors Foundation Inc. have asked the high court to stop the bidding because of a reported plan to demolish a historical landmark on the property.

The Fujimi property is among various Philippine assets in Japan that were acquired after the Second World War as part of reparations.

Fujimi is located in the commercial and residential district of Chiyoda, which includes the Imperial Palace and other institutions of the Japanese national government like the legislature, the Supreme Court and the Prime Minister's residence.

The petitioners said the Philippine Ambassador's residence, believed to have been built in the 17th century, would be torn down reportedly to give way to a 21-story mixed-use structure.

"We are not preempting an approval of the TRO petition," Salas said. "But unless we are convinced, the BAC will continue with its mandate."

She said the committee has not been furnished a copy of the petition, but that the BAC believed the auction was legal

PART1 /B2

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PINE CREST
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PSBank, Sumitomo target 15% of local motorcycle market

By Doris C. Dumlao

SUMISHO MOTOR FINANCE Corp., a joint venture between Philippine Savings Bank and Japanese trading giant Sumitomo Corp., expects to deploy a majority of its P2-billion seed money to provide affordable motorcycle financing in the country.

The joint venture, which was launched Wednesday night, is targeting to grab at least 15 percent of the urban motorcycle market in the country.

"Looking at the present motorcycle industry in the Philippines, 600,000 units of new motorcycles were sold last year. We believe that it will grow to over one million units per year in no time. We believe our entry will stimulate market growth further," said Hisano Tabuchi, Sumitomo's general manager for automotive division, during the launch of the venture Wednesday night.

Nobuyuki Fukui, president of the joint venture company Sumisho, said typical loan size would range between P50,000 and P80,000, payable from one to three years. He said the newly formed company would focus on giving credit for the purchase of Japanese-manufactured commuter motorcycles like those made by Honda and Yamaha.

The joint venture is expected to roll out its first loan across the country starting in the first quarter of 2010 to capture rising demand. Fukui projected that by 2014, motorcycle sales in the country could hit 1.5 million. By that time, he said Sumisho would have opened 25 to 30 branches in strategic areas across the country.

PSBank president Pascual Garcia III said since the joint venture company generates scale, in many cases, a quasi-banking license from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (which, in turn, would give it the flexibility to beef up funds for refunding by accepting placements from selected investors. For his part, Sumisho Garcia said the joint venture capital of P2 billion jointly contributed by PSBank and Sumitomo was more than sufficient.

Since it is less expensive to put up a branch of a financing company compared to that of a bank, Garcia said the venture could raise required capital immediately for lending.

While Sumisho itself will only provide financing, it is also talking to other institutions which may also provide insurance coverage to motorcycle users.

Ministry of Municipalities
PROVINCE OF ANTIQUE

OFFICE OF THE DEVELOPED BIDDING COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID
(ITB No. 20-2009-01-bac)

The PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF ANTIQUE, thru the Development Budget Fo...

Name of Project	Marine Equipment
Location	Antique, San Jose, Antique
Brief Description	Actual breakdown of items to be procured is in the bid form
Approved Budget for the Contract	P2,700,000.00
Source of Funds	Provincial Development Fund
Delivery Period	within 7 calendar days after receipt of Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should be PHILGEPS Registered and Mayor's/Business Permit current and valid for 2009. Bidding documents may be purchased upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 and submitted on or before 10:00 A.M. December 14, 2009. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives at the Provincial Auditorium, Capitol Compound, San Jose, Antique. Late bids shall not be accepted.

All qualified bidders are invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on December 7, 2009 at 10:00 A.M. at the Provincial Auditorium, Capitol Compound, San Jose, Antique.

The Provincial Government of Antique reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract without incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(SGD.)
JOSE L. MIRALPEIX II, CESO IV
Provincial Administrator
BAC Chairman

(ITB) Dec. 4, 2009

New market pattern

SURVIVAL TIPS SEE AT THIS POINT IS THE REALization that holding may become more than just—as when it used had to be—"exciting" as the market plays out a more fantastic scenario than my "Fearless forecast."

I was right in saying that the market was ready and willing to take more risk. However, I did not expect how big the appetite was until now.

What's more, there seems to be money to fuel the appetite that will lead to more big deals, and change the concentration of ownerships and positions of market plays.

MARKET RIDER

Dave Sonora

Looking back, early a pattern has actually been playing out for months. We were just too distracted by old worries to discern them.

End of the virtual game

We are in the last stretch of the virtual game. In the table below is the journal of transactions of the virtual players for week 25 covering the period Nov. 23-27, 2009. Provided in a separate table is the overall performance standings vis-à-vis for the week.

The table on the individual portfolio summary of the virtual players for week 25 will be dispensed with. Instead, a portfolio summary report covering these trading activities up to Dec. 2 will be published at the game's final day on Tuesday, Dec. 8.

The report on the remaining days and final results together with the schedule of awarding of prizes will be announced at the end of the week.

Bull on like spin

Many of the new financial and investment stocks that are slowly but surely coming out in the industrial and mining sector are actually the products of political directions. And with the very three investment activities are playing out, they can potentially lead to a bull-blown market bull run in the Q4 2009. The problem is that they can be also disrupted by political directions to no end.

Considering all factors, though, the latter scenario is completely possible at this time. The alarming national considerations lead to closing of the economy to private participation that drew the curtain to a end.

Therefore, better stay close for more market trends to find and relieve you might find good stock plays in the following days. The current market has now all the potential to go beyond the near term.

For more email the Market Rider at market.rider@inquirer.com.ph or directly at dnsonora@yahoo.com.

DISCLOSURES

THE STOCKHOLDERS of **OMICO Inc.** on Nov. 26 elected the following to the company's board of directors for the ensuing year: Ramon E. Garcia Jr., Antonio M. Garcia, Rolando E. de Guzman, Ronald L. Arandia, Antonio A. Lim, Lito Fortaleza P. Orquiola, Eladio B. Villanueva, Joseph V. Sison, Miguel R. Montano and Rhea Anthony N. Uno and Moshe S. Jacobs as independent directors.

IMAGINEERING PLASTICS Inc. on Nov. 27 elected Irving Sitchon as director of the company, replacing Jaime Zamora. Completed by Eduardo Gonzalez, Inquirer Research

Philippine Stock Exchange
(As of December 3, 2009)

Overseas

BSP sets inflation target for 2011 at 3-5%

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS has set its inflation target for 2011 at a range of 3 to 5 percent, reinforcing its earlier statement that increases in consumer prices would be benign over the short to medium term.

"In line with the inflation-targeting approach to monetary policy, the BSP announces that the inflation target for 2011 is 5 percent, plus or minus one percentage point," the BSP said in a statement.

The inflation target has been approved by the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), which is tasked to set the government's economic policies and targets.

The BSP is primarily mandated to keep prices relatively stable through its monetary policy tools. Nonetheless, monetary officials said the BSP also supports efforts of other government agencies to boost economic growth as long as efforts to pump-prime the economy would not lead to a breaching of the government's inflation targets.

From December 2008 to July 2009, the BSP has implemented a series of cutsto reduce the key interest rates in a bid to boost overall production of the economy. The BSP's overnight borrowing and lending rates now stand at record lows of 4 and 6 percent, respectively.

BSP officials said the bringing down of the central bank's key policy rates was meant to influence banks to reduce their own lending rates and spur borrowings. Officials said borrowings should support out-

BSP, B4

Gov't to bid out management contracts for 3 IPPs

By Amy R. Remo

THE STATE-OWNED POWER sector hopes Aboitiz and Lobtiden Management Corp. (PSALM) is bidding out within the first quarter of next year the management of National Power Corp.'s underperforming power projects, also to increase EPIRA compliance for these projects.

PSALM president Jose Rene Almendras said Wednesday that the unsolicited bidding of the EPIRA contracts would enable the government to breach the 70-percent privatization level required to fully implement open access, wherein huge electricity consumers could choose their own suppliers.

PSALM will bid out the Unified Leyte geothermal power plants (which consists of the 127-megawatt Upper Mahiao; 232-MW Mahiao; 180-MW Mahanagdong and the 51-MW optimization plants), 600-MW Malaya oil-fired power plant and the 1,200-MW Ilijan natural gas combined cycle.

According to Bautista, PSALM was considering to break up the management of the contracted capacity for the Ilijan facility into several smaller contracts and offer them to a number of prospective firms.

He explained that this was meant to prevent market domination for a single power firm. It was also intended to make the facility financially viable since the contract for the Ilijan plant, with its huge capacity, would have been too expensive for a single company to acquire.

"We are still studying [the proposal] because these contracts can be divided. You don't own the plant, just the contracts. We don't know yet if we will proceed [to break up the Ilijan contract], we'll just announce it, but it's a big possibility," he added.

Bautista noted that PSALM's decision would also depend on the feedback from the bidders on what they prefer and if they were comfortable with such a setup.

He also said that PSALM has yet to complete the studies for the proposed selloffs as the results are expected to present them to members before the year ends through a memo.

The bidding for the IPPs of Unified Leyte, Malaya and Ilijan forms the third batch of contracts offered to the private sector for management. IPPs are currently contracted to supply electricity to state-run Napocor.

While management of IPP contracts are turned over to the private sector, the winning bidders will manage the contracted capacities of the government in the IPP power plants.

On Dec. 11, PSALM is bidding out IPPA contracts for the 20-MW Bongabon mini-hydro, 345-MW San Roque multipurpose hydroelectric power plant in Pangasinan and the 74-MW Bakun hydroelectric power plant in Benguet.

Sees full implementation of 'open access' next year

BDO Leasing's . . .

From page B3

Dalfungco said it would continue to abandon developments related to the EPIRA through 2010. The model ruling mapped in the issue can be changed, at any time, should circumstances warrant such a change, it said.

BDO Leasing remains a dominant player in the Philippine leasing and finance industry. It has the largest asset and capital base and is the most leveraged among the country's bank-affiliated leasing and finance companies as of end-December 2008. BDO Leasing registered the highest net income in the industry in 2008.

BSP sets inflation target for 2011 at 3-5%

From page B3

consumption and investments.

For this year, the official inflation target is between 2.5 and 4.5 percent. As of the first 10 months of the year, the average inflation rate is 3.1 percent. The BSP said the inflation target for 2009 remained attainable.

For 2010, the inflation target is set at a range of between 3.5 and 5.5 percent. The BSP said its latest estimates showed that the inflation target for next year was realistic given that consumers price increases were expected to remain benign.

The low inflation environment is partly due to the decline of the global economic turmoil, which has kept consumption growth relatively slow.

The BSP said the tempered growth in consumer prices, however, was giving it flexibility to keep interest rates low, which should eventually help jump up growth of the economy.

In the first three quarters of the year, the economy, as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP), grew 0.5 percent. In the third quarter alone, the economy expanded by 0.6 percent.

The government has set its official GDP growth target for this year at between 0.5 and 1.0 percent. The BSP expressed confidence that the lower end of the GDP growth target was attainable.

Challenges for this year's economy, besides the impact of the global crisis, included the recent calamities, dubbed storms Ondoy and typhoon Pepeng. The calamities resulted in damages and losses, particularly in the agriculture sector.

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It believes that the use of unlicensed software, which is a criminal offense under the Intellectual Property Law of the Philippines, must be put to a stop.

First Pacific . . .

From page B3

to accumulate additional shares in Philex, equivalent to 1 percent, as of P22.70 each.

It was also disclosed for the first time that First Pacific had lifted its stake in EL 5 percent interest in Philex since prior to the core buyout.

The purchase price for the block represents a 7.5 percent premium to market price as of the Dec. 2 closing of P19.50, in the past 52 weeks, prior to the agreement, the share price of Philex traded between a high of P20 and a low of P8.13 each.

About P7.4 billion of the purchase price will be paid in cash and the balance of P2.1 billion in cash carrying a rate of 8 percent a year and maturing on Dec. 7, 2010.

The transaction is seen allowing the Pangilinan-led conglomerate to consolidate control in Philex. The debt-owned bond Security System remains a significant stockholder with a 23-percent stake in Philex, which has a market capitalization of about P93 billion.

With the latest deal, First Pacific will increase its investment in Philex. Philex Board is to first from three, while the MIP will retain three. Two are independent directors.

Pangilinan has already been elected chair of Philex during the company's stockholders' meeting earlier this year.

It is not clear whether First Pacific will be obliged to make a tender offer for the public offer having reached the 35-percent trigger. First Pacific first bought into Philex offering in mid-2008, which was more than a year ago.

Gov't defers...

From page B1

and watch for new deals.

Asked whether the auction would still push through this year, Inks said the BAC would try its best for this to happen.

For November, the DOF said three Japanese companies were shortlisted to vie for the lease of the Philex property. Each offer, which is the government expects to earn at least P1 billion, was opened.

Pajimi is one of three big-ticket items in this year's privatization program on which the government is relying to mitigate the swelling of the budget deficit, which reached P166.1 billion as of end-October. The government's target is to keep the full-year deficit at P325 billion.

The other two are the sale of a P35.5-billion parcel of land in the Food Terminal Inc. complex in Taguig City and a 40-percent stake in the PNOC Exploration Co.

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID/REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the:

Project	Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract / Source of Fund: DBP Fund	Cost of Bid Documents
Supply and Installation of DBP Signages for all Branch Offices and LBP Offices	1 lot	P14,500,000.00	P10,000.00

*VATs included in the cost of the Bid shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

Payment Mode of Delivery:
For NCR/Luzon Area Branches – one time thru January 14, 2010
For other Branches – One Hundred Twenty (120) calendar days from receipt of Purchase Order

Schedule of Activities

Particulars	Date	Venue
Pre-Bidding Conference	December 17, 2009 (Friday) at 9:00 a.m.	4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of December 23, 2009 (Wednesday)	BAC Secretariat, 4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	December 23, 2009 (Wednesday) at 9:30 a.m.	4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines, must have been authorized to engage in the supply and installation of signages for at least three (3) years and maintain a SB accreditation/number. Only bids from bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall undergo the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The Contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined to pass during post-qualification process.

Interested parties may download these forms at www.dbp.com.ph and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. Prospective bidders may secure the bid documents and Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P10,000.00.

The prospective bidders are advised to check the Bank's website and the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PHILGEPS) for bid bulletins and announcements regarding the project.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract to any bidder prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 818-9511 to 9555 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Negros Occidental
Municipality of Valladolid

Standard Project Number: SPI-0909-05 Project Reference Number: xxxx-2009-05
Revised as of: July 29, 2009

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Municipal Government of Valladolid, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective contractors/distributors/manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Procurement and On-site Delivery of Hardware and Construction Materials for Various Barangays
Location	On-site Delivery to Various Barangays, Valladolid, Negros Occidental
Source of Funds/Appropriation	Municipal Development Fund - Valladolid Local Government
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P5,753,500.00
Contract Duration	15 calendar days

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have the personnel and equipment/contract, license or certificate required by the project. The prospective bidder must have the following minimum equipment requirements as indicated in the Eligibility Forms: The Eligible Contractor/Supplier as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. The bid specifications of the Invitation to Bid shall be considered.

All submission relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

	Activities	Schedule
1.	Issuance of the Invitation to Bid/Apply for Eligibility	Dec. 04 – Dec. 08, 2009 a.m.
2.	Pre-bid Conference	Dec. 04, 2009 p.m., Negros Occidental Conference Room
3.	Opening of Bids	Dec. 08, 2009 p.m., Negros Occidental Conference Room
4.	Bid Evaluation	Dec. 09
5.	Post-qualification	Dec. 10
6.	Notice of Award	Dec. 11

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders at the BAC-TWG office upon payment of non-refundable amount of Three Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P3,500.00) to the Municipal Treasury.

The Municipal Government of Valladolid, Negros Occidental reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or any part thereof, to waive any defect in the bids received without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders, and to accept such bid/s considered most advantageous to the government.

Approved by:
ATTY. RUDOLFO F. MACARAIG
BAC Chairman

Partisan corporate activities

THERE ARE ONLY 30 DAYS TO Christmas but, except for newspapers and newscasters, businesses in shopping malls, the supposedly happiest room of the room in the country does not appear to be eagerly anticipating it.

The dampened enthusiasm is understandable.

After two explosions and, recently, a gruesome assassination, there is little reason to engage in the merrymaking that usually characterizes the season.

Another distraction is the presidential stand in the coming elections.

After six years (or to be precise, nine years), we shall elect a new president.

There is already something unfortunate about this, in the highest political office of the land.

A new chief executive represents a new beginning and hopes for a better tomorrow.

There is a similar, if not extravagant, excitement in the election of local officials.

At this level, passions are more agitated, emotions run higher and the desire to win is most intense.

Although the official campaign period has not yet come, the candidates and their supporters are already gearing up for the battle for the hearts and minds of their diverse constituencies. And funds are needed to succeed in this effort.

At the end, then, many businesses are already courted by campaign contributors.

Donations

The rule of the classic electoral campaigns is, no contribution is too small to be ignored. Every centavo counts. Of course, whoever puts more can expect a higher "return on investment" in case the candidate wins.

There is no question that businessmen have the right to vote for and support the candidates whom they think are qualified to hold the positions they're aspiring for.

However, when it comes to giving material or financial support to a candidate, a line has to be drawn between acting in a personal capacity and acting on behalf of the company.

Under the Corporation Code, corporations can make reasonable donations for public welfare, hospital, charitable, cultural, scientific, civic or similar purposes.

This is the only instance that the law allows the use of corporate funds for purposes other than to enrich the interests of the company, although the aggregate sum for which that it contributes and not by the goodwill generated by donations.

In the same breath, however, the law provides that "no corporation, domestic or foreign, shall give donations in aid of any political party or candidate for purposes of partisan political activity."

Offenses

The prohibition is directed to the corporation as a juridical person, not to its officers or stockholders.

A corporation can be held liable for breach of the corporation if it is proven that the donation is a political party or candidate was in connection decision of the board of directors.

The penalties for violation of this rule consist of a fine against the corporation and imprisonment for the officials responsible for the commission of the offense.

The laws on political contributions become tighter and violators side an election offense that carries a heavier penalty. If it is committed by a public officers, any of the following consequences:

"Dismissal of public officers or those engaged in the rendition of natural resources;

"Holders of contracts to supply government agencies with goods or services, or to perform some service or other works;

"Grantees of franchises, incentives, exemptions, allowances or similar privileges or concessions by the government in any of its divisions.

The common denominator for these corporations is they stand to benefit in the long run, if the candidates in whose campaign they gave contributions are elected to public office.

Consequences

The winners are under "moral obligation" to repay the debts of gratitude by favors received during the campaign when corporations bid for contracts, concessions or privileges in their areas of governments.

Reneging on expected reciprocation could have adverse consequences to the future (and not disclosed) to ungrateful politicians.

Business executives long remember those they helped during electoral council, time who suddenly develop amnesia or paralysis time.

Despite the prohibition against political contributions, it is common knowledge that corporations contribute—although in the sly—to national or local candidates, depending on the nature of their operations.

For obvious reasons, no corporation or an eight can will openly announce its favored candidates.

If it bet on the wrong horse, expect the candidates who did not make it to the list but later emerged victorious to get back at the corporations.

Some corporations give campaign donations as a matter of convenience. They believe in the capability or integrity of their chosen candidates.

Others bet for "insurance" purposes. They seem to be on good side of whoever getting power.

If this is the objective, they have to be very sure about their choices or if they can afford it, hedge their bets by donating to all the candidates.

This approach may be expensive, but the results are guaranteed.

(*For feedback, please write to* pauldeocaa@inquirer.com.ph)

IBM pouring investments into RP

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES "FLABBERGHAST" IN rising over new technologies and the services that he or she might bring to the local economy and the academe have prompted computing giant IBM to collect more investment dollars into the country.

In an interview, IBM developer interviews get most manager Ivano Cingolani said the Philippines, particularly Quezon City, was one of only 40 locations worldwide to be chosen to host an IBM Innovation Center, precisely because of the country's conducive technology environment.

"There's a willingness to cooperate among governments, universities and local players, and a willingness to do new things. There's also a huge growth potential, as shown by the growth in Internet use in the country," he said.

"Our decision to choose the Philippines was also driven by the country general manager (Jaime Rebuquit), who was approachable enough in saying that he wants a correct him and here on the mission," he added.

The IBM Innovation Center at the University of the Philippines Ayala Land Technohub aims to provide small and medium businesses a center to test their applications further — enhancing these to market, as well as a chance to network with other businesses in various Innovation Centers located around the globe.

Cingol said the establishment of the Innovation Center is part of IBM's strategy of "leveraging better globalization."

"The Innovation Center is meant for the local market. There's a need to provide education to the local business community, and we can do that through the center. People are curious, so we're giving them a physical place where they could learn," he explained.

"We also a venue for technology enablement—getting knowledge to work. More important than just giving general awareness is providing the assurance to the huge "new value" generation. The Innovation Center is all about collaboration. It will help connect Philippine businesses to businesses in other countries," he added.

Through the Innovation Center, he said, local firms could go higher up the value chain and come out with more complex, relevant and profitable offerings.

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PLDT ready for new broadband service

By Paolo G. Montecillo

PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE Telephone Co. (PLDT) is ready to launch its ultra-fast broadband Internet over power lines (BPL)" service, which is expected to lead to more widespread Internet use in the country.

The BPL technology is a by-product of the PLDT group's acquisition of a controlling stake in Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the country's largest power distributor.

The new technology will allow PLDT to efficiently bring broadband connectivity to its 24 million customers connected in Metro Manila and nearby areas using Meralco's network of power lines.

PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan said recently the BPL technology in parts of Mandaluyong, which started in July, were ongoing.

"I've seen what the [BPL] can do, and it seems to be doing fine," he told reporters earlier this week.

"There's still a lot of work to be done," Pangilinan said, adding that a more widespread roll-out of the service would be made only after the results are in.

Despite the popularity of online gaming and social networking sites in the country, Internet use in the Philippines is still far from being as widespread as it is in other countries in the region.

Only one in every Del Filipinos were to the Web, as compared to other Asian countries like Korea and Singapore, where almost every one is online.

'09 corn output seen growing despite typhoons

Anger over anti-smuggling bill delay

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

THE FARMERS ARE ANGRY. Their pleas to curb smuggling have been unheeded. They see a future due to the process, mired in lack of political will to curb smuggling.

This is typically true at the time, when much of the smuggling runs smuggling are allegedly used for corruption in anticipation of the coming elections.

Although the primary targets are the smugglers and their collaborators in the government, anger is now being directed at the senators and congressmen who are delaying the passage of the anti-smuggling bill.

Political will

Actually much of the smuggling can be stopped. That has been proved in 2008, when the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Anti-smuggling (Coast) met twice a month with then Local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes, who chaired the government's concerted move body.

What the Coast was dedicated, smuggling soared in spite local. Today, political will is right smuggling is back running.

The Anti-smuggling Bill makes mandatory what the executive branch sees as optional, despite lacking in level of political will. For example, the bill makes it mandatory for the BOC to give copies of the manifestations manifest to the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry. The BOC has the practice to be imported on a given shipment before it arrives. This information can be used by the DA and DTI to apprehend smugglers.

Onion smuggling

The Alyansa Agrikultura and member organizations Business obtained a list of 63 onion shipments that arrived from January to July 2009. Since all shipments require an import permit and no import permit was given for onions in 2009, it can be surmised that most of those were smuggled.

COMMENTARY

Encouraged by a hearing led by Sen. Mar Roxas, chair of the Senate trade and industry committee, and Senator Loren Legarda, chair of the Senate agricultural committee on Aug. 14, the alliance presented the bill to Cayetano Commissioner of Supervisor Morales the next day. Morales then issued a memo to his subordinates to attend to the...

Two and a half months have passed but the hearings have issued nothing. It takes no more than a day to finalize which of the 61 shipments have import permits. Those without permits should have been immediately charged with smuggling. But since there is no law mandating the BOC to give the list of shipments disseminated in the IRMs to DA, there is no legal basis to charge the BOC with withholding valuable information that can be used to fight smuggling.

The farmers can't wait to suffer the heavy losses in the form of the P65 million worth of smuggled onions that arrived during the period.

Disappointing delay

The Anti-smuggling committee of shows to lack of political will on the part of the government to fight smuggling, a bill must be passed to compel it to take action. The bill will also identify cases and prosecution of smugglers.

Such a bill was already passed by the House of Representatives in 2007. The Measure and the bill version of Philippine Ambassador, worked together, the bills' main sponsor Rep. Erin Tañada, to ratifying the bill during the 15th Congress. However, the Senate failed as by not passing the due to lack of time and "other priorities."

The 4th time's the charm. Let's hope the 15th Congress. Unfortunately, the Congress is now distracted by election fever that it may not also be able to pass the bill.

Misplaced priorities

Instead of the anti-smuggling bill that has been pending for six years now, the Revised Excise Convenience or RBC is scheduled for approval in the next few weeks. RBC is an informational agreement to facilitate import procedures, which we are asked to sign. Given our administration, it is more important to sign anti-smuggling than to facilitate import procedures.

Perhaps it is the vestiges of colonial mentality, or a misplaced desire to look good to the world as the signatory of free trade agreements — but the Philippines is the only country in the Asia-Pacific region that has not ratified the FAC. We should address this most urgent need first, which is to fight smuggling. The RBC can come later.

The farmers need justice from the 14th Congress. Despite the election fever, legislators should not disrupt the business of this. The next Congress can then start productively without the smuggling baggage.

(The author is chair of Agrarian. He inquiries and suggestions e-mail [redacted] or telefax (02) 8922113.)

Farm expansion, yield per hectare increase cited

By Rica T. Ochoaico

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE is projecting a 2.68 percent growth in corn production this year, despite the negative impact of climate change on farmers.

Citing a report from the Bureau of Statistics, the DA said corn output this year was seen to be 7.046 million metric tons.

The final estimate was projections of 3.11 million MT was 2.27 percent better than the 3.04 million MT a year ago. However, the DA said production in the second half was projected to increase by 3.10 percent to 3.82 million MT.

Rice Director Romeo Recide said in a report that for July to September, corn production surpassed the year-ago target by 3.17 percent to 2.37 million MT from 2.26 million MT. This was attributed to the expansion of harvest areas and the improvement in farm yield.

Assistant Secretary Ernesto B. Arnaldo said initiatives to adjust the corn support price from P11 to P13 per kilogram in 2008 were to cater its procurement volume also helped mobilize economic corn plants and encouraged corn farmers to continue planting.

Recide said harvest areas grew by 3.10 percent from 921,099 hectares to 949,688 hectares in the third quarter, with the yield per hectare yield rising by 2.61 per cent from 3.45 MT to 3.5 MT per hectare.

"Despite the damages caused by Typhoon Ondoy and Pepeng, Pinatubo Region, Central and Luzon, the standing crop for the October to December 2009 points to a production gain of 3.15 percent from year-ago level of 3.36 million MT to 3.46 million MT," Recide said.

For this period, Recide said the harvest area might expand by 4.25 percent from 484,000 hectares to 505,606 hectares, while yield may improve by 4.61 percent from 3.29 MT to 3.39 MT per hectare.

He said there were significant corn production increases in Cagayan Valley, Northern Mindanao, and Cotabato because Region is Hinblot Mindanao in the third quarter.

For July to September, corn output in Cagayan Valley increased by 13.82 percent or 31.9 percent or 57,200 MT due to massive plantings in idle and harvest lands and in areas damaged by Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, which led to the expansion in harvest areas by 33.42 percent or 21,000 hectares.

Recide said that for the last quarter of the year production is seen to expected to grow by 5.89 percent or 57,200 MT due to massive plantings in idle and harvest lands and in areas damaged by Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, which led to the expansion in harvest areas by 33.42 percent or 21,000 hectares.

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TMPC sees higher production in 2010

By Abigail L. Hu

WITH SERIES SEDANS NOW coming in rebound, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. expects to fully utilize its Gen. Nasa manufacturing facility, which is now operating at 70 percent capacity, by next year.

In an interview yesterday, Toyota Philippines vice chair Shirel To said the company would just follow demand movement.

"As demand grows, manufacturing will also improve. That's the perfect scenario that we'd like to have," he told reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration of the 27th Toyota Cultural Center in the University of the Philippines Diliman on Wednesday.

"We've been increasing our investment little by little in our auto parts business. We'll be manufacturing up... to [which] is healthy in that scenario," he added.

He said TMPC should register "a single-digit" growth in 2010.

In an earlier interview, Toyota Philippines president Haruki Isi said the company expected overall wholesales for the year to increase to face the same as in 2008, or 46,945 units. The company closed 2008 with a market share of 16.9 percent.

As of end-October, Toyota sustained its lead in the market by clinging onto 16.9 percent. Sales, however, dipped 3.3 percent in the same period to 36,880 units.

PAP has to import a lot because of the latest shortage in palay and palay output this year.

Gov't jacking up budget for rice importation

THE PHILIPPINES HAS INCREASED THE budget for its third rice tender for 2010 supply of 600,000 tons of white rice.

National Food Authority (NFA) spokesman Rex Bocquein said in a phone interview that the agency had decided to jack up its budget for the rice tender on Dec. 14 to P16.128 billion from P15.264 billion.

The original delivery schedule is between May and June. Originally, the delivery was slated for between February and May.

"The market is moving," Bocquein said of the bidding and private consumer's moves for increasing the budget.

The change in the budget is an effect of the high prices quoted during the Dec. 1 tender, the first for a volume of 600,000 tons.

NFA officials had said after the no-bid that the prices quoted might go down if the Philippines were to buy 300,000 tons short of the tender volume. It may also affect the budget for future tenders, they said.

"The approved budget is the limitation," NFA director for marketing Romeo Almeda told reporters.

Bocquein said there was a possibility the NFA would rebid the tender for the Dec. 14 tenders.

The NFA budget for the first and second 600,000-ton tender was set at P15.264 billion — the same budget set for two future tenders of a similar volume. In other terms, the import volume may be increased if offers were above P16,000 per ton, including transport fees.

Bocquein based on the price offers at the Dec. 1 tender, "NFA can award only 300,000 to 320,000 tons," Bocquein said.

The lowest bid at the tender was $598 per ton, submitted by Manfood Corp. of Vietnam. Thailand's Vietnam's top exporter, Thailand's $620 higher than the best offer of $468.50 a ton at the May tender for 250,000 tons.

The NFA may award contracts for 300,000 tons of white rice supply to Vinafood2, which offered the lowest bid of $598 per ton for 300,000 tons white rice. It also offered 300,000 tons at $600 per ton and at $640 per ton.

Vinafood2 has three other offers of 400,000 each with a price range of $600 to $687 a ton, but these were higher than the offers of other suppliers.

Chairperson Rice & Rural Co. Ltd. of Thailand offered 100,000 tons at $609.95 per ton.

Louis Dreyfus Commodities Asia Pte. Ltd. offered 100,000 tons at $609 per ton, the second lowest bid. It plans to source 70,000 tons from Pakistan and 30 the 60 and the rest from Thailand and/or Vietnam.

Absorbed and the grain authority's bids and awards committee is weighing the options as it compares the Dec. 1 bids with the preceding round's tenders prices.

He said the NFA had the option not to award any contract if it found the offers unreasonable. However, it also has to consider that prices might increase in the next tenders if the NFA waited for Dec. 14 and 15 to open bids.

Both government and private sources said that further spike in prices was likely.

Bocquein said the change in the budget was within the provisions of the Procurement Law or Republic Act 9184.

Under the law, the NFA bids and awards committee can increase the contract value, upon declaration of an earlier's prohibiting conference.

The prebidding conference for the Dec. 15 tender was held on Dec. 2.

The NFA, however, can no longer amend the budget for the Dec. 14 tender, since it will exceed the P15.26 billion.

By the time of the Dec. 15 tender is awarded, the Philippines will have procured from abroad 2.35 million tons of white rice for 2010 supply.

In 2008, the country imported 2.3 million MT of rice, when prices peaked at $1,000 per ton.

The rice market has been seeing signs of increase in Philippine rice importation to 3 million MT in 2010 due to damages caused by the typhoons on farms.

Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, which struck in September and October, resulted in palay losses of 1.2 million tons, which translates to 845,000 tons of white rice, Rice T. Ochoaico

Unilab Raises the Bar for Sales Team

A First in the Pharma Industry

(From left to right) Unilab's vice president and chief operating officer, received the certificate of accreditation from the Professional Regulation Commission represented by Jennifer M. Flores; (5th from left), officers from Unilab's business units such as Lilli, Pediatrica, Rx-Plus, Therapeutica, Phenacen, Animal Medical Education Department (AMED) and Executive Office were also present to witness the ceremony.

Unilab Laboratories, Inc. (Unilab) is making the standard for professional sales representatives in the country with the continuous roll-out of its Professional Regulation Commission-certified training program. Unilab is the only pharmaceutical company in the Philippines recognized by the PRC Board of Pharmacy for its continuing medical education that effectively provides sufficient medical knowledge and highly instills the value of integrity in presenting product information in an accurate, responsible and ethical manner. To date, there are more than 300 professional sales representatives fully accredited by the PRC Board of Pharmacy.

Unilab's training module is divided in two categories namely: Pharmacology, Biochemistry, Anatomy and Physiology; Basic Disease Concepts and a broad knowledge of the pharmaceutical industry including its governing laws, rules and regulations. This is further supported by more training from other divisions on specific drugs and diseases.

"Our organization appreciates the dedication of our professional sales representatives. Hence, we make sure that our training modules cover a broad range of topics that will equip our sales team with sufficient knowledge on the industry and to our customers. As our front liners, they are the persons that go out on the field to communicate the quality, safety and affordability of our medicines and hence can help alleviate the condition of the patients. They are responsible for imparting significant messages to the medical community," says Benjamin U. Yap, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Unilab. "In this profession, our sales people work hand-in-hand with the doctors and other health professionals to provide solutions to health problems, in the same way they also communicate the concerns of the medical community to us as we seek further ways to serve the patients. They could be fully prepared to carry out these duties," he adds.

Unilab is the country's leading healthcare company that develops, manufactures and markets a wide range of therapeutic and consumer health products in almost all therapeutic categories, driving its businesses this focus. Unilab was recognized as Best Employer in Asia by Hewitt Associates and Outstanding Employer of the Year by the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines. It also the recipient of the first Philippine Quality Award for Performance Excellence, considered to be the most prestigious award for organizational excellence.

Asia to have key role in recovery, WB says

NEW DELHI—ASIA WILL have to play a bigger part in the global economy's fight to previous downturns as US consumers, assuming the same role as drained drivers that they have to previous economic recessions because they have to pay off debts and improve their finances.

"The US consumer has to deleverage and has to rebuild savings," he said. "This is one of the opportunities for Asia's largest role in the recovery" as supplying additional sources of demand, said Zoellick in the interview conducted ahead of his current visit to India.

The World Bank president is the latest to look at India, China and other Asian economies as new engines of global growth against the backdrop of many developed nations still emerging from recession.

Zoellick added that if see, employment in the United States remained above 10 percent next year "you are going to see feedback effects."

"It's going to increase delinquency for credit card debt, for consumer loans, in the US some commercial real estate is quite soft and that's going to flow back into the banking system," he warned.

"You will see some financial institutions doing very well but if they are dealing with the consumer retail market they will continue to be hit by those losses," he said.

He added that the world was awash with liquidity and that this posed a challenge to central bankers in some East Asian economies who needed to take steps to avoid the creation of "asset bubbles." On Wednesday, the World Bank announced it would give India at least $1 billion to help clean up the heavily polluted holy river Ganges as part of moves to sharply hike lending to the country.

India's finance ministry said the World Bank was expected to triple lending to the country to $3 billion this year for development, infrastructure and other projects. AFP

US recovery gaining momentum

WASHINGTON—THE GOOD NEWS: RECOVERY gained traction in late fall as Americans opened up their purses and factories ramped up production. That assessment Wednesday by the Federal Reserve marked its most upbeat view since the US economy rumbled into recession two years ago.

The Fed's new snapshot of business barometers Americans' moods found that consumption has generally improved since the last report in late October.

Eight of the Fed's 12 regions surveyed reported some pickup in activity or improved conditions, the Fed said.

Three regions were: Boston, New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Dallas and San Francisco, the Fed said.

The four other regions—Philadelphia, Cleveland, Richmond and Atlanta—described conditions as little changed or mixed.

The new report adds to evidence that the economy is rebounding after the worst recession since the 1930s.

The main challenge for Fed Chair Ben Bernanke, who will be on Capitol Hill on Thursday seeking confirmation for a second term, is to sustain the fledgling upturn, especially after the benefits of government spending fade next year.

To that end, the Fed is expected to hold a key bank lending rate at a record low near zero when it meets on Dec. 13-14. Economists predict the Fed will keep rates at super-low levels well into next year.

Still, Wednesday's survey also finding that inflationary concerns remain. At the Fed bank's behest, it's tried to avoid fanning the embers of inflation.

The central bank hopes that will entice people and businesses to step up spending, which would bolster the economy.

Although the jobs market remains lousy, the Fed survey found some scattered signs of improvement in some markets.

In the Boston region, some businesses were starting to hire and reverse pay cuts or wage freezes implemented earlier in the year. The St. Louis region noted that the service sector recently started to expand.

Still, holiday hiring expectations nationwide were mixed, the Fed report said. And most private economists predict that even as the pace of massive job losses slows, the nation's unemployment rate—now at a 28-year high of 5.0 percent—will continue to climb into next year. Some predict it will rise as high as 11 percent by the middle of 2010 before slowly drifting down.

The Fed warned last week that it could take five or six years for the job market to return to normal.

That's why Bernanke and other think that consumers...while spurring to hold up fairly well now to all the negative stresses—may turn more cautious, sustaining the recovery.

"This slow motion recovery is going to solve an extraordinary amount of patience," said Brian Bethune, economist at IHS Global Insight. He and other analysts predict the economy will see growth moderate in the months ahead.

Consumers in late November spent money with general merchandise and auto sales improving across much of the country, the Fed report said. Unsure of consumer demand, most merchants were keeping stocks fairly lean during the holiday season. Yet some retailers suggested that they have to offer customers more aggressive deals the holiday sales season.

The Fed survey also found that manufacturing conditions generally showed some improvement.

Biopharmaceutical companies in the Boston region noted that revenue increased. The Dallas region reported stronger activity for makers of high-tech equipment, paper and petrochemicals. Upticks in food-related production also were mentioned in some regions.

Many manufacturers said they were "optimistic about the near-term outlook." But makers of construction-related materials were still pessimistic, mostly because of expectations that problems in the commercial real estate industry will be prolonged.

In fact, commercial real estate conditions continued to deteriorate, the Fed report said. Most regions were plagued by rising vacancy rates, downward pressure on rents and lacks. (Long news developments

By contrast, the housing market—sales and construction activity—improved across much of the country, according to the Fed survey. A collapse in the housing market, which dragged down home prices, threats the country into a recession. A rate-induced turnaround in housing is a key ingredient for a lasting economic recovery. AP

Federal Reserve turns upbeat in latest survey

Henderson exits as GM chief

DETROIT—THE LEADER OF THE NEW General Motors was done in by an old problem at the largest US automaker. Change wasn't happening fast enough.

ERIK Henderson and CEO Wilt Henderson parted ways Tuesday, the board report that the automaker's turnaround wasn't moving more swiftly and Henderson frustrated with second-guessing, two people close to the former CEO said.

Board of directors Whitacre Jr., the former head of AT&T Inc., will take over as CEO while a global search is conducted.

It was unclear whether Henderson or the board moved first in the surprise resignation, which came just hours before Henderson was to be the high-profile keynote speaker at the Detroit Auto Show.

In a hastily called news conference at General Motors Co.'s downtown Detroit headquarters, Whitacre would not answer questions, but said the board and Henderson agreed that he should step down.

Whitacre thanked Henderson, 52, a lifelong GM executive, for his leadership and said the company is on the right path to a road offering high-quality cars and trucks worldwide.

"We now need to accelerate our progress toward that goal," the 60-year-old Whitacre said in a brief appearance.

Both were asked if investors lose their jobs by the US government, which owns more than 60 percent of the Detroit automaker in exchange for giving it billions in loans. AP

Peugeot, Citroen, Mitsubishi in talks

PARIS—FRENCH CARMAKER PSA PEUgeot Citroen said Thursday it was in talks with Mitsubishi Motors Corp. that could lead to a "strategic partnership."

In a statement, France's biggest automaker said it "confirms that it has started discussions with Mitsubishi Motor ... concerning the possibility of extending their relationship which could lead to a strategic partnership."

The statement did not go so far as a report in Japan's Nikkei business daily, which said that Peugeot Citroen will buy a 36 to 38 percent stake in Japan's No. 4 automaker for up to 300 billion yen ($2.4 billion, 2.23 billion euros).

The report sent shares in Mitsubishi soaring. They closed up 13.4 percent at 1,151 yen in Tokyo after earlier soaring nearly 18 percent. On Wednesday, Peugeot Citroen shares closed up 1.1 percent at 34.55 euros.

Mitsubishi denied the conditions the Japanese newspaper report, which gave no sources. But the Japanese company issued a statement saying: "There are no facts to be announced."

The paper said Peugeot Citroen—Europe's second biggest car company—and Mitsubishi are in the final stages of capital tie-up talks. The deal could effectively put Mitsubishi under Peugeot Citroen's control, creating the world's sixth largest automobile alliance.

The French carmaker may seek more than a 10 percent stake in Mitsubishi, hoping to tap into Mitsubishi's expertise in electric vehicles and other environmental technology, the paper said.

Peugeot Citroen said it has already worked with Mitsubishi on product development, with cooperation on four vehicles, about technologies with electric vehicles and a joint venture in Russia. AP

American, partners offer $1.1B to Japan Airlines

TOKYO—AMERICAN AIRLINES UPPED the ante in the tug-of-war over Japan Airlines, vowing Thursday to lend a $1.1 billion investment in the struggling carrier to prevent it from falling into the orbit of rival Delta.

American's chief financial officer, Tom Horton, said reporters that the offer is "far superior" to the $1 billion rival proposal from Delta Air Lines and its 90 Delta partners.

He refused to describe the competitor's offer, or say how much of the money would come from American. But he said the proposal by Americans, its oneworld partners and private equity firm TPG Inc. is part of a larger restructuring plan to get JAL back on solid footing.

Horton said he is more assured that if JAL refuses to link with American, over a 10-year period it would gain additional revenues of some $700 million.

Delta, meanwhile, is trying to lure JAL away from its partnership with American.

American consultant Mark Riehle of CRA International in Boston said the battle is far from over.

"It does sound like it has the potential to drag on for months," Riehle said. "There's a lot at stake here, especially given the importance of the Japanese market and the Asian market to all of these carriers."

Demand for air travel has been under intense pressure from the global economic slowdown, but US carriers that compete internationally know it will be important to have a strong presence in Japan when things rebound. Airlines can reap a premium for long-haul seats, particularly business and first class.

Japan Airlines has been cowering for years, hamstrung by ranging fuel prices, global competition and an image problem caused by a series of safety lapses. At last $1.5 billion in the first half ended September and has obtained approval for government loans in recent weeks to avoid grounding flights. The airline remains attractive as a partner because of its extensive routes in Japan and other important markets in Asia.

JAL president Haruka Nishimatsu has said he will make a decision regarding the offers by the end of this year.

Delta president Ed Bastian said Thursday the billion-dollar offer by his airline and its SkyTeam partners to get Japan Airlines to join their alliance is still on despite the dollar's recent weakness. He expressed confidence the deal will get clearance from regulators.

"The offer was raised to dollars," Bastian told reporters at a Tokyo hotel. "That's not enough to change our offer," he said in acknowledging the dollar's fall. It dived to a 14-year low against the yen last week.

Bastian said Delta, based in Atlanta, would be willing to consider teaming up with a third party investor if the Japanese government required more money pumped into JAL. He did not provide details.

American, a unit of AMR Corp., which is based in Fort Worth, Texas, has said if JAL switches from the oneworld alliance it will join the Japanese carrier up in $600 million to $700 million in the first two years of the changeover. AP

AXA chief: 'Life insurance is not about dying; it's about living!'

In a recent press event, AXA Philippines President & CEO, Mr. Rizo Ocampo, made a controversial yet compelling statement about Life Insurance and about the insurance industry.

"The problem is several reasons: many among Filipinos do not understand their real needs," explained Rizo. "When we found out that the majority of Filipinos think that life insurance is only about death and dying. What Filipinos need to realize is that not only DEATH, life insurance is actually for the living and how we can provide value."

Rizo expounds on these points, "You see, in USA, more than 80% of the families we put our insurance solutions on consist of the working college educated, economic and professional households, savings & investments and wealth building. This is because our products are not sold for death or dying, but are designed so that people can make life and live it up knowing that their financial future is secured by AXA."

This insight was the key message during the recent launch of AXA's new brand spree with the theme "Live It Up!" held at the Greenbelt 5, Ayalaland Malls, Makati City.

Jose Marcos, Chief Marketing Officer of AXA Philippines further explains the launch theme, "Because AXA is redefining insurance and the way Filipinos should feel and think about insurance, we can tell Filipinos to 'Live It Up' because now life insurance is designed to enhance quality of life."

"From the minute of our launch, even to redefining insurance, 'Live' would not — we have the character, and our CEO topping from insights — who create the events of your trying life moments — that's why we have the AXA brand well defined," he enthusiastically shares.

Jose pointed out other proofs of how AXA plans to redefine the life insurance industry: "We have started using true customer insights in our customer materials as well as even the point of our communication to our customers. We have redefine insurance so it is shorter and easier to understand. We also just developed a new Universal Insurer Insurance called 'AXA Life Invest' which assures that our premium investments are safe, yet also provides the best investment returns with competitive. The way we keep the integrity of the financial industry and always to provide."

"We as AXA will always be available, reliable, and accessible to our customers by redefining the way we do things and keeping the life better. This is the new mantra of the AXA brand" said Ocampos.

AXA Philippines is a joint venture between the global AXA Group, one of the world's largest life insurers and the Philippine Group.

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BUSINESS

BCDA opens bidding for Jusmag property

By Abigail L. Ho

THE BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY has opened the bidding for the development and privatization of a portion of the Jusmag property in Fort Bonifacio, representing the third phase of the state firm's asset disposition program.

In a statement yesterday, BCDA vice president for business development Myrna Zosa said the winning bidder would enter a joint venture with BCDA for the development of the property behind upscale Bobos Hub.

The 346-hectare property has been priced at a minimum of P10,000 a sq.m.

Interested entities should submit a letter of interest to BCDA and purchase the terms of reference for the bidding for a non-refundable fee of P25,000.

The documents outline the eligibility requirements for interested entities and the criteria that will enable them to submit technical and financial bids.

Those declared eligible bidders may purchase the second volume of eligibility documents for P50,000. This will contain the requirements for the technical and financial proposals.

The draft Bureau of eligibility documents will be from Dec. 7-14.

The bidder documents, on the other hand, will be issued to all eligible bidders at the same time in the distribution of the notice of eligibility or ineligibility.

BCDA will hold a pre-eligibility conference among interested parties on Dec. 14, to enable the state firm to discuss the property and the bidding terms of reference, as well as to give participants a chance to clarify any concerns.

Zosa said the awarding of the joint venture deal to the winning bidder should be done by March 2010.

Meanwhile, BCDA has also extended the deadline for the submission of bids to operate, manage and maintain the Subic Clark Tarlac Expressway, following requests from interested parties for more time to compile their bid documents.

From the original Dec. 4 schedule, the submission deadline was moved to Dec. 4, 2010, said BCDA vice president and chief finance officer Victor Edillon.

In line with this development, the issuance of the notice of award had also been moved from Jan. 22 to Jan. 22, said the contract signing and issuance of the notice to proceed had been rescheduled for Feb. 22, 2010.

RP, Russia OK new air rights agreement

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE VISARE OF THOMSEN AND trade from Russia is expected to rise following the recent signing of a new air rights agreement between the Philippines and the former Soviet state.

Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) head Cecilia Jacinto said that under the deal, the Philippines and Russia had agreed to fix up more airspace to each other's flag carriers.

"[We agreed on] multiple designations for flights per week and points in the Philippines and Russia," he said via text message following discussions held in Moscow on Nov. 30 to Dec. 1.

He said the negotiating panels had approved the granting of fifth freedom rights covering still undetermined points in the two countries. This would allow Philippine carriers to fly to Russia, pick up passengers from there and fly again to another destination where the passengers deplane. This goes the same for Russian airlines.

This is seen as an opportunity for local carriers to make Russia their gateway to Europe, given its geographical proximity to Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom.

The new deal goes on top of a previous arrangement agreed upon by Philippine and Russian officials around this time last year.

Under the previous deal, the Philippines will be given the chance to pick three points in Russia, while Russia would do the same for the Philippines.

Designated carriers from each country would be allowed to fly as often as they want to the three predetermined points in both countries.

But like last year's accord, no definite number of flights was agreed upon, noting that the demand from airlines to service the route would be the primary consideration.

Members of the Philippine air panel include representatives from the DAB, Department of Tourism, Department of Transportation and Communications and airport managers. Data different points in the country.

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Tina Lagdameo

You've read how it worked for these guys. Now be one of those who keep work and life in balance with Nokia Messaging for Email.

BDO Leasing's ₱8-B STCP issue gets high rate

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL CREDIT WATCHER PHILIPPINE Rating Services Corp. (PhilRatings) has issued a high credit rating for the P8-billion planned short-term commercial paper offering of BDO Leasing and Finance Inc., the leasing and finance subsidiary of BDO Unibank.

PhilRatings gives the proposed issue a PRS 2 minus rating, the second highest grade on its STCP rating scale. This means the borrower has a strong capability to pay both the principal and interest on commercial paper issue. This rating also means that ample inherent liquidity is being maintained by BDO Leasing.

The ratings agency said the issue could mean a downgrade of a PRS 1 rating—the highest rating on the PhilRatings short-term credit rating scale—but to a lower degree. Earnings trends and coverage ratios, while sound, are non-robust to the industry.

The issuance of STCPs is expected to benefit the company in terms of lower funding costs. Proceeds from the issuance are intended to be used to refinance maturing obligations and to fund new business.

PhilRatings said the rating was given after considering the following: BDO Leasing's solid market position, sound capital base, continuing benefits being derived from its synergy with parent company BDO, as well as the relatively positive prospects for the local leasing and finance industry.

It also noted the profitability and asset quality challenges faced by BDO Leasing, as well as necessary reductions to address challenges in light of the global financial crisis. "The results of such measures, as well as gauging the effectivity of specific steps taken, may only be ascertained over the medium- to long-term as reflected in the company's actual financial performance and asset quality indicators as compared to submitted projections," the rating agency said.

BDO is

BUSINESS Friday

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Website: www.inquirer.net/business
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Rupico

Truth sets brands free

Be who you really are, says marketing expert

CUNNINGHAM

By Reiner Domingo
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—BUILDING A brand is like figuring out who you are and making a niche, a brand expert turned entrepreneur told delegates of the recently concluded 22nd Philippine Advertising Congress here.

"We are not separate from each other. That's an illusion. We are different, not separate. We are all one," said RJ Cunningham, who founded and built the Enlightened Tobacco Company in the United Kingdom.

People and organizations, he said, "all have the same problems, same issues. Every man, every business has illusions which it must shed."

Cunningham's Enlightened Tobacco manufactured "Dunk" cigarettes in 1995. The company's marketing strategy embodied his philosophy of truth in advertising and positioned the brand in "the honest smoke."

"Cigarette kills, and you will die a less t

TRUTH B2-1

IN THIS ISSUE

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The Expert Receives Exceptional Recognition

JOINT COMMISSION INTERNATIONAL
QUALITY APPROVAL

St. Luke's Medical Center
Re-Accredited Again by Joint Commission International

St. Luke's has been officially re-accredited again by Joint Commission International, the world's most prestigious healthcare accreditation body.

Joint Commission International was established to improve the quality of health care and safety of patients in the international community by evaluating and accrediting healthcare organizations in 39 countries for the past 10 years. St. Luke's was accredited in 2003, becoming the first hospital in the Philippines to achieve the recognition. It successfully hurdled the triennial re-accreditation surveys in 2006 and again in 2009.

This recognition was made possible through St. Luke's commitment, vigilance and expertise in providing quality health care in an environment that focuses on patient safety and continuous improvement.

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Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons
Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

GOINGS·ON

Seminar on soap making set

THE GOLDEN THEMELINE SMILE COLLEGE, Inc. (GTSC) in cooperation with Bombad is a one-day seminar on soap making to be held at the PTTC training room A and B, Department of Trade and Industry building, Gil Puyat Avenue, corner Roxas Boulevard, on Dec. 12 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Topics to be discussed include basic soap formulations, costing and marketing strategies.

Basic seminar include how to make body scrub, foot spa soap, foot spray, foot powder, hair shampoo and hand and body lotion.

For questions, call 436-78-20, 421-10-77 or 0918-918-9168 423-96-87.

RP welcomes TEDxManila

THE FIRST TEDx EVER IN THE PHILIPPINES debuted in TEDxManila will be held on Dec. 5, 2009 at the UP College of Law in UP Diliman.

At TEDxManila, TED Talks video and live speakers combine to spark idea discussion and connection in a small group.

TEDxManila's theme for its maiden event will be "Victory: Be Bathed in Its Many Nurturing Attributes Goods Jr., Bbc Boy Couture Store, Mark Bop and Bea is Mercado, Jr.

You can follow TEDxManila on Twitter http://twitter.com/TedXManila and get more information about TEDxManila at http://www.tedxmanila.com/.

Interested in attending TEDxManila? Send an e-mail to tedxmanila@gmail.com and look for TEDxManila event coming soon to tedxmanila.com.

Real estate talks on

THE MAKATI INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE will conduct a seminar on Real Estate Taxation on Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Picpa) Auditorium, 6/F Park Terraces Building, 6/F Park Terraces Drive, Ayala Center, Makati City.

The lecturer is engineer Dante Cruz, who has more than 40 years in real estate, engineering, construction, management and education.

For other details or advance registration, those interested may be reached at 756-0018 to 020-0823, or 088-0-230-8734 (632) 403-9431 or by email at info-tidfoundation.ph or tanet_phil@mail.com or visit www.philrealestate.blogspot.com

Korean brand gaining ground in RP

By Carrie Salmorin-Narisma

FILIPINO CONSUMERS PAID LESS favored Japanese brands when buying television sets.

This strong market has had been the biggest biggest stumbling block in many non-Japanese television makers' bid to take the local market for its long.

But some three to four years ago, non-Japanese brands, particularly Korea's Samsung, broke the barrier and made significant headway in the Philippine color television market.

Not only was Samsung able to establish its foothold in the local scene, it even made it to No. 1 in the TV market, dislodging long-established brands here.

Data from research firm GfK Philippines showed Samsung leading the total TV market in the country with a 19 percent share in terms of sales volume as of September this year.

Two Japanese brands followed underdeveloped 18.3 percent and 17.2 percent.

For LCD (liquid crystal display) TVs, Samsung's market share in the same period was substantially larger at 35.6 percent of total LCD TVs sold, as against its nearest competitor, which accounted for 17.3 percent.

In the flat TV category which is the midrange or the more affordable segment of the market, Samsung—with its innovative UltraTin TVs—also captured a market share of 23.4 percent as of mid-September this year, while its nearest rival had a share of 18.8 percent.

Hard work, huge investments

Manfred P. Navarro, head of product marketing for consumer electronics business of Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp., says the market share is the total TV market is a results only because Samsung has an entry in the curved TV category, which still accounts for 10 percent of the total market.

Navarro says Samsung has been pouring substantial growth in TV sales despite the contraction in the total TV market, particularly in the GMT TV outside our cable television category.

But the R&D topped oversight.

It took the company—from its headquarters in Korea to every subsidiary and affiliate all over the world—some years of hard work to get to where it is in the TV market.

It poured substantial resources in to both technology and design development and marketing.

"Samsung invested...and is continuously investing heavily in R&D. It gambled particularly on the LCD technology," he says.

It was a risk that the company is to introduce the LCD technology in the local market. However, Samsung made the market appreciate and adopt the technology.

While its competitors, having dominated the market for so long, became complacent, Samsung continued to innovate in technology and designs and marketing.

"We worked hard to continue improving our technology and to push it up to the market," the says.

In the Philippine market, Samsung was excited to raise consumer awareness on Samsung TVs and to win market acceptance and patronage.

Bundling, pricing

To reach a greater number of consumers, Samsung adopted an aggressive pricing strategy.

"We made sure our price are competitive. We offered value for money as against the elevated pricing stance of some of our competitors," Navarro says. "Our price tag, on the average, about 20 percent less than those of competing brands."

And as new technologies or product designs are developed in the headquarters and made available here, Samsung makes sure the Philippine market has them.

"That's how we won the Filipino consumers' confidence and acceptance," Navarro says.

With its SlimFit TV, Samsung continues to address the greater majority of Filipino consumers. It is, however, working on getting its market to shift from flat TVs to LCDs, or specifically to its curved TVs to LCDs.

This is done by pricing its 32-inch LCD TV only modest close to that of an 29-inch SlimFit TV.

A marketing innovation Samsung introduced in the local TV market, and which has been widely recognized by Filipino buyers, says Navarro, is the so-called bundling system. Under this system, Samsung offers not only TV sets but an entire home entertainment solution in various packages, giving buyers value for their money and enabling them to enjoy maximum TV viewing pleasure.

A separate package is especially designed to suit the requirements of the local industry, an important market promotion through prize TV and billboard advertisements. It paves money and efforts into shop displays and in helping dealers improve their shops. It puts up and maintains Samsung Lifestyle centers in selected shops to feature all its product lines in one location.

Samsung's biggest concern today, however, is the entry of parallel imports.

Although they may be the same brand, Navarro says, TV sets made for other markets were designed to suit the specific requirements in those markets, they are differ in frequencies, thus these may not be suitable for use in the Philippines and are not covered by warrantees here.

She says Samsung wants to in-

KOREAN B3

Samsung edging out Japanese rivals in the growing TV market

SAMSUNG hopes to shift RP market from CRTs to LED televisions.

Storming the Ad Congress with Globe

Registration made easy

THE DEPARTMENTS OF TRADE and Industry and local government have begun rolling out streamlined business registration and licensing processes nationwide following major gains reported in pilot areas in the Visayas.

The number of registered new businesses (spawned) grew by as much as four times in locations like Calbayog, while P17 million in annual productivity savings is projected in Iloilo from the simplified business registration procedures.

DTI and DILG have the backing of the country's incumbent development partners for the initiative to disseminate the successful business permits and licensing system (BPLS) model.

BPLS has helped many local government units (LGUs) increase revenues and cut red tape, while improving the local investment climates and productivity.

Multi-donor support for the BPLS rollout is provided by German Technical Cooperation (GTC), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

These development agencies have pooled their resources through the Philippine Development Forum (PDF) where they are members of the working groups in growth and investment climate and decentralization.

Co-championing the drive to institute BPLS across the country are Trade Undersecretary Zenaida Maglaya, Interior and Local Government Undersecretary Austere Panadero and the National Competitiveness Council (NCC).

Complicated business regimen

Red tape is a common gripe among business owners, many of whom tend to skip the process altogether.

For LGUs, fewer registrations **mean less revenue and therefore** even fewer funds from fines and taxes that would have gone to the development of their areas.

But for those introducing reforms by trial and error, LGUs in Regions 6, 7 and 8 sought assistance through havoc-headed capacity building programs to **garner their processes.** GTZ and IFC, through their joint Private Sector Promotion (PSP) program, introduced the BPLS model in Bacolod and Dumaguete cities back in 2005. The number of approved **business permits immediately** rose by an average 18 percent and processing time went down from 14 days to two.

To date, close to 100 cities and municipalities have increased their proportionate share in the government's internal revenue allotment fund, from which they **draw as much as 90** percent of their annual budgets.

Streamlining business registration involves the reduction of steps and required forms, the institution of one-stop shops, computerization, better records management, closer monitoring and inspection, learning workshops and benchmarking with successful LGUs.

According to Dr. Herwig Mayer, director of the GTZ decentralization program, which is also helping implement BPLS, the two crucial stages of intervention were during payment of fees and issuance of mayor's permits at the start of the year, and the subsequent regulatory functions including inspection.

The most difficult stage, he said, was inspection since even the major cities lacked teams for monitoring establishments that could number in the thousands.

Efforts to replicate BPLS elsewhere took off recently with two **investment workshops** held for LGUs in the Central Luzon and Mimaropa regions.

BPLS will be further "upscaled" across Mindanao through similar two-day workshops.

GTZ is providing technical inputs in the workshops owing to its experience in deploying BPLS in Regions 6, 7 and 8.

IFC and the LISC-EG program of USAID are sponsoring the inputs in Luzon and Mindanao, **where they hope to have** seamless business registration and renewal processes in place for the January 2010 business registration requirement.

Truth sets brands free

From page B1 »

his death [because of that habit]—if you're real sure that, then you are a sinner. This is about responsibility," he said.

"Cigarettes are the only legally available consumer product which kills people when used exactly as intended," he said.

When it comes to smoking, Cunningham said the issue is **freedom of choice.**

"I love cigarettes. I love inhaling the smoke. But we should also be honest about this. Tell the truth," he said.

"Death" cigarettes took the United Kingdom by storm when it was introduced and became a "killer brand," with legions of supporters who were taken by its marketing campaign.

A typical copy of "Death" cigarettes' campaign said: "Cigarette smoking does not make you sexy, sophisticated or stylish. It kills you. We are not selling a pack of lies. We are selling a pack of cigarettes."

Another read: "They're every bit as good as other cigarettes and every bit as bad."

"Finding a good cue and fighting against it...that's when Death's all about. The tobacco companies never saying the link between smoking and lung cancer was ever proven. Meanwhile, people were dying from their cigarette habits. We decided the best way to build our brand was to tell the truth," Cunningham said.

"In terms of standing defiance, energy, we were successful. But in order to sell, your products must be on the shelves," he added.

He said "Death" cigarettes were chemical-free and rolled in hemp paper, meaning it was pure tobacco and nicotine.

Soon after the introduction of "Death" cigarettes, tobacco companies began fighting back, knocking Cunningham's brand off market shelves.

The tobacco industry took him to court.

And so, from 1995 onward, **sales of "Death"** took a nosedive.

In 1999, **the Enlightened** Tobacco Company was shut down.

However, rapid slicing on his **growing reputation** for shadboxing norms, Cunningham set up a brand-marketing agency and built a client list, including Hellmanns, B&Q and Nokia.

After he sold the agency, he ran the luxury shoe designer company Georgina Goodman, with his wife.

"I never thought that I would be doing this while I was selling 'Death.' But like I said, everything is subject to change," he said.

Cunningham said that his experiences taught him are endearing lessons about brands.

"Brand is an illusion, a brand is a promise. Customers are lured to idea. [and] logos are reminders of that. Brand is consistently delivering the promise at all points—from manufacturing, design, marketing, distribution to point of sale—to customers," he said.

"So who you really are. Figure out your own truth, which may be different from other people's truths. That's what matters. It's the same for people, as it is for brands," Cunningham said.

He said there are two kinds of fear—"one is good and the other is bad for you."

"So many people are afraid of failure. There is a tendency now to headfights kind of fear, and there is the kind of fear that leads to survival by way of courage," he said.

"Have the courage to fail. I think you all glorious failures. Only through pain can we change—it's better than not caring at all. Maximum learning is maximum pain," he said.

Korean brand gaining ground in RP

From page B1-2

form Filipino consumers about this to help them avoid problems related to purchasing units that may not be suited for the local environment.

LED high-definition TV

Although already well-entrenched in the LCD and flat TV market, Samsung takes strides step forward by making its latest television technology, the LED high-definition TV commercially available in the Philippine market.

Although another brand came in first to this segment, it has yet to make its presence felt. "Samsung is practically the only one in this segment here at present," Serrano says.

"Innovation in design, technology and marketing will continue," she says. "Samsung will never be complacent."

The company will continue, and even step up, efforts to please the market and take it to the next level of home entertainment experience.

BUSINESS Friday

By going viral, admen exploit germ of an idea

By Penelope Isle P. Endozo

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MARKETing managers who are used to treating flirt in advertising may have to make room for the hot-pursuit drift of a fourth-virtual medium.

In what has been dubbed Share Revolution, communication experts that have brought us memorable ads on radio, TV and print are now trying to untangle the DNA of viral marketing, whose strands connect people to products through the World Wide Web.

Through popular sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Plurk, Multiply, YouTube and even e-mail, a new market has drawn more than the curiosity of business-minded folk in what is called "social marketing."

But to be limited to networking sites and blogs, managing director Brad Geiser of Geiser Marketing considers the definition of the phenomenon, saying that "social marketing is about helping marketing messages get a hand on human behavior and human value to create a marketing campaign where people enjoy participating to."

Social marketing is not 'spam'

Viral marketing offers that appear in networking sites are not "spam"—product or service solicitations in the guise of personal messages. The term "viral," however is used to describe the fast spread of an online advertising campaign conducted through the Internet.

If a legitimate offer has been executed in a "non-aggressive" or "non-obtrusive" way, consumer would likely welcome promotions and campaigns that have social value, according to Geiser. After all, the rule that one must not talk to strangers is applicable to the online scenario as well, especially in small talkers.

Like target demographics, networking sites have also carved niches. Friendster is known to retain an active following from class C, B and D, while Facebook has been attracting class A and B. Multiply has earned help a number of online souls, even if it started as a social site to keep photos and blogs.

Krispy Kreme challenge

Testing whether Geiser's viral marketing prescription holds water, Krispy Kreme dared Geiser to try and unseat the company's best-selling original glazed doughnut with new chocolate doughnut varieties—something that has never been done before, Geiser says.

Kaboom carried out a marketing mix to promote its Chocolate Kreme, spending on billboards, radio plugs, print ads, PR...the works.

But Geiser knew that a product referral from a friend is a power marketing tool. He then asked himself: How does that empower fans of Kremers to share with their friends?

That's where the "body" e-mail came in handy, says Geiser.

"Half of [our] target market have Facebook [accounts], but 97 percent of our market has e-mail," Geiser explains.

By using e-mail and the digital word-of-mouth that pours Facebook fans with "you've been glazed," only 12 percent of doughnut fans responded to the initial offer of 5,000 free Krispy Kreme products.

Given that it was a company-to-user approach, it was an expected lousy strategy, Geiser says.

But after getting their free doughnuts, the fans recommended the same promo to at least five other persons. That second wave then asked friends to go to Krispy Kremes stores, which resulted in an exponential surge in spreading the word.

And all they did was they "took a daughter and applied a social value to the daughter," says Geiser as he sums up his success story.

It's different when a friend sells a friend, he adds.

So the campaign that was initially sent to 5,000 people eventually reached a 60,000-strong database, it translated to a 12 percent increase in sales, where 3,000 people or 30 percent were new customers.

Google my Lola Techie

Being new does not necessarily mean efforts are all experimental. Creativity still rules as marketing principles remain the same even if the use of the medium requires adjustments outside of 1st media.

For John Sojo, vice president of Beyond's corporate communications, he says the success of the Lopez-led company's "Lola Techie" campaign to promote its DSL service has become more than an introduction to the usual on using the new virtual medium for ads.

Sojo explains that, aside from the Lola Techie TV ads, the Internet-based outlets and ads have assumed a greater role in complementing the success of an ad campaign. Such campaigns tend to be "neglected," often with a budget that seems to be thrown with a shoot.

He says their research shows that 30-50 percent of all brand switching is due to recommendation from friends, as against 20 percent each for advertising, promotions and personal search.

But what if a fictional character recommends you to a service or product? Heroes and online fans of Lola Techie relate well to the sitcom-like premise of the Internet site, which translated to a 700-percent increase in queries and 56 percent growth in sales.

"Lola Techie" represents your typical grandmother, except that she pokes her 100,000 fans, plays Mafia Wars or Café World on Facebook, tagging 250 investments a day.

The generic ratings ratings is her 3,000 Twitter followers and gains her own homemade video on YouTube that elicit cares and cares. Lola has even raked her 4,500 Multiply online "opus" to give her their best Lola or Lola quote, giving a prize to the one that has submitted the best.

Comic relief: Lola Techie's fictional presence is "composite character" also under the social marketing bandwidth.

But according to Sojo, they secured the services playing "Lola Techie" to be a techie to real life, which was not a problem for this 70-something active Facebook and Yahoo Group user.

Sojo says that online marketing is now getting itself ready for offline competition.

"If you want to reach the group, you have to be there. So, it's not dependent now on whether you're a technology or marketing company," he says.

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Madrid designer tells how she gave up designing 'it' bags

Tissa Fontaneda, who used to design for Narciso Rodriguez and Loewe, shares how luxury lost its luster for her

By Cheche F. Moral

WHEN TISSA Fontaneda read Dana Thomas' best-selling book, "Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster," she was so happy that she wrote the author a congratulatory letter.

The book, the Madrid-based bag designer said, is proof of what she has thought luxury brands have become all along, and an ultimate vindication of her decision to give up designing accessories for luxury conglomerates.

In the book, Thomas discusses how conglomerates have turned true artisanship into mass-produced status accessible to just about anyone who passes through a drop-line shop.

Before she turned 30, Fontaneda moved from Paris to Spain to work in the prototype department of the house of Loewe, in charge of handbags by Thierry Hughes and Carlos.

Before that, she worked in Paris for Daniel Swarovski, designing jewelry and couture handbags.

When LVMH designers at Loewe, she developed fashion jewelry and leather accessories for Narciso Rodriguez for several seasons.

"It's polemic," an amused Fontaneda said in Manila last week when asked if consumers are paying too much for so-called "it" bags. "It's strange coming from me, but yes, sometimes you're just paying for the brand. That's one of the reasons I left [Loewe]." In the end, it all boils down to economics. "It's no longer about the bag, or the kind of leather you want to use, but what it costs and if it would sell. I thought, I don't want to work this way."

In 2003, after the birth of her third child, she quit and set out on her own.

Fontaneda was in town last week on the invitation of Ben Benzo and Silk Cocoon's Jean-Luc Goulbourn, Frances Lim and Karina Goulbourn Feliz Rozas, who has been working with Silk Cocoon for 11 years, supplying her customers in Europe with fabrics from the company, not Fontaneda at Loewe.

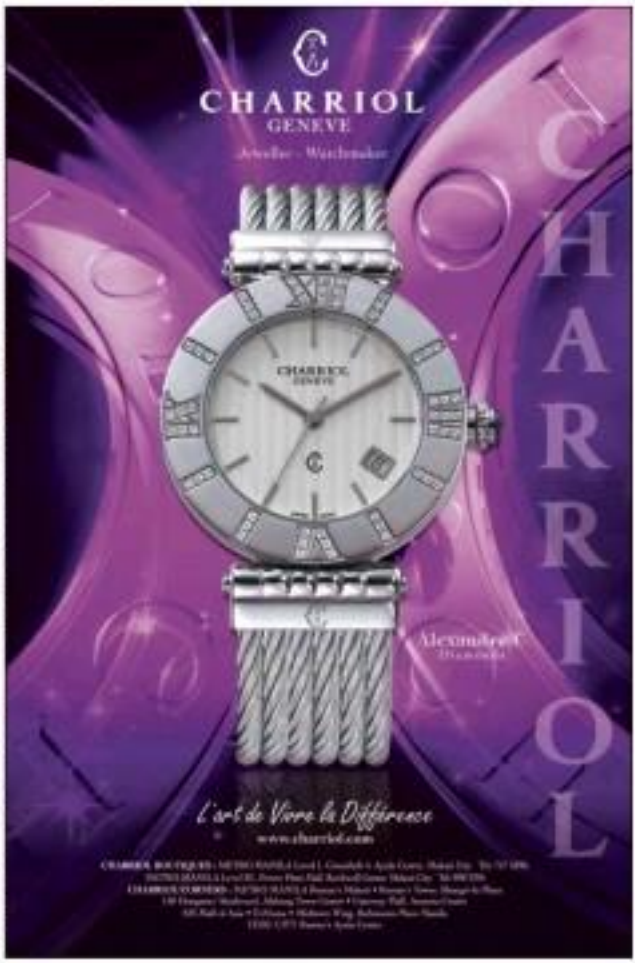
In the past, Loewe used Silk Cocoon fabrics in its purses, including a collection in 2004. The bag designers so liked the fabrics that after leaving Loewe and setting up her own line of bags, Co Collections, she got in touch with Rozas again.

At Silk Cocoon at Benavidez Hotel, Makati, a limited selection of Co Collections is on show. To complement Fontaneda's leather collection, Silk Cocoon has also designed a few garments that use leathers and the bag designer's leather as accent details. In two bags, Fontaneda also used Silk Cocoon fabrics.

Bag is personal

"Your bag should be about you. It shouldn't be because Kate Moss is wearing it," Fontaneda said. An avowed fan of Kim Ohlin, she talked about how a handbag feels and looks so much better as the leather ages and gets worn. "It becomes more supple and has that vintage look," she added pleasantly.

As such, Co Collections' look is largely functional—soft, slouchy city and leather styles that can become an indispensable object for the busy woman. And yet, there's permanence to the bags—a rig-



CHARISMA Cornia, Cristy Cornia, Sayon Corporation's Hemba Lin, Ayala Mall/Cebu Bizzie, Ayala Mall/Norwesco Revolution and Geida Revolution

IHQ Manalo, Miguel Pastor and Thai Airways' Nirut Chantarachoti

FRANCO Duss and Alexandra Cruz

ROBERT Benko and Hannah Lantan

CHANNEL V VJ and event host, emcees and guest looking Mimi with talented makeup artist and stylist Rang Zubiaga

Thai fashion company holds party and show to launch its three brands

VISITING from Hanoi, Bernice Pereira with Hawaiians' first beautiful couple, handsome Freddy Gonsalves and his gorgeous wife Anne with their pretty daughter Adriana

THE AWESOME, INTERNATIONAL Sapan Corp. headed by its brilliant, vineyarded genius Bert Chan, whose family owns a dozen, dubbing, fine grocery ing, to include foreign brands like The Face Shop from Korea, France's Celio, Singapore's Charles & Keith and Pedro, Gaiardo's La Senza and Aldo, and Sva from Israel.

Now, pathogens, the Jetsetting Trump of Cosmetics, Thailand's top fashion company, organized a special Thai-inspired cocktail party at Whitesgave in suburban Ilaro new multi ng brands: CC Double-U, CPA/Chaps and Lyn Shoes with accessories, all geared toward a fashion-forward generation, and known for its range of clothing items, including its hip denim jeans.

Lyn Shoes and Accessories has eye-catching casual flats, sophisticated party heels, bags, small leather goods and stylish jewelry.

Boyce Corporation's young owners and thaker VP for business development, Kenan Uy, presented an exciting fashion show that drew loud applause from the invitees that included Thailand Ambassador Kulkasem Singhara Na Ayudhya; Thai Airways' pupular GM Nirut Chantarachoti (who strolled off a round-trip ticket to Bangkok) who was the chairman of Joseph Lugay's super charmer deputy managing director Charan Singhatachlhel.

I asked both, "Who cheated first when during exams?" They both laughed and said, "We took turns." Another student from the night before," It remands me of myself and my classmate in fourth grade till we graduated from La Salle. Don't ask me who it was, pathogen, it's been so many years ago. Now I'm things we do during our memorable, but high school days, 'di ba, pathogen?

Among the VIP guests were three other brothers hailing from achievers from CPC Chaps, CC Double O and Lyn.

New Hawaiianas bags

Manila's trendiest celebrities flocked to Hawaiiana City as the world famous fashion brand launched its latest must-have in the one day and stylish icons of the metro.

The event introduced the Hawaiiana bag Collection, the newest addition to the fashionable family bearing the same tuxedo

SUPPIN Intaher, president Virgilio Lim, Lengee de Leon, CC/DO brand manager Rowell Sarmiento, brother Mr. Chairman, Jaypol Group's Charan Singhatachlhel, CPA/Chaps sales and marketing manager Chanchira Hongkuntorn; Lyn sales and marketing manager Nicarat Jumnanthornphak; Joyce Glacier Sy, and multifaceted retail king Ben Chan (3rd from left)

PIA Magalona

HAWAIIANA Philippines brand manager Annmel de Leon and ex-Beyond Brizzlez model Daniel Manansag

ARRIANE del Rosario, Chabet Prieto and his wife Inez Delgado and Issa Lobregat

ROSS Gonzales, Kira Barcenilla and Karina Bunay

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Mauricio Arevedo

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using YRL Photo Solutions

DNA, as that of its subtler flip-flops. With makeup from Miu Esteban and hair styling from Kiehl's, the event was not only watched by Manila's stylistas but by thousands of viewers online via live broadcast courtesy of Smart Communications. Bobby Carmona, fashion show director, described the show's whole concept as a showcase of the many dispositions of the bag. With the same sense of functional style, Chow saw fashion statements from Hawaiians showcased the basic features that define the shoe brand. True enough, Myrna Simon, editor in chief of Spot.ph, commented: "The new bag collection is so extensive that females will now give meaning to form and not the other way around."

Super stylish fashion designer Hindy Tenioso also give schmitz up on the Hawaiiana bags. "Everybody loves bags and everybody needs bags. Hawaiiana bags are easy to mix and match just like the flip-flops because they are so versatile that you don't have to think about it too much," said Hindy.

Still celebrated Hawaiianista Ms. Magdiana, who owns at least 156 pairs of Hawaiiana flip-flops, raved about how her favorite brand has evolved. "I'm all for evolution when it comes to fashion because I know how important it is for brands to innovate. That's why I find it so nice that Hawaiiana has found a venue where customers like me can complement their flip-flops through the stylish and functional bags that we have right here," she says.

Apple Chan's styling the same rainbow of colors as the flip-flops, the different bag styles are subtly ingrained with distinct Hawaiiana elements: two patents on the soles of the flip-flops and Greek patterns on the straps of flip-flops are integrated into the different bag styles. Hawaiiana's website mentioned the bag's durability by integrating familiar rubber elements that provide sturdy yet stylish base, straps and locks. The raised rubber buttons used to keep the flip-flops' soles and straps together can also be found detailing the bags, looking for the Hawaiiana DNA.

"The original design elements of our flip-flops are skillfully transposed to the latest must-have. This new collection has been meticulously designed with the same originality, creativity and style that are inherent to the brand," said Anner Gonzales, managing director for Sorn S.A. Inc., exclusive distributor of Hawaiiana in the Philippines.

Indeed, with the newest fashion must-have from Hawaiiana, Manila's stylish stars can't help but be aligned.

PLDT Watchful launch

Our town's young and young at heart power people rushed in like a flash flood at the chi-chi Establishment, where they were given a taste of the latest when PLDT upskilled installed another first, the WatchPad, multitap, with its less than PLDT billion's main man Manny Pangilinan. He gave a toast to what he called "a fusion of the richness of the Internet with the popularity of multimedia content."

We were treated to a sampling of WatchPad offerings like the 24 TV channels on mylifetv, video-on-demand movies on myWeb+ beginning with work by Cannes Film Festival best director Brillante Mendoza and Palm Film Festival best director Jeffrey Jeturian plus games galore from Level Up on Mymusic plus the free multimodule of myview channel.

Keeping us rocking was the high-quality music of Jay Durian, Yeuka, Marcus Davis and Santino, which can be sent load and stored exclusively on myTunes.

With everything said, pathogen, this one-of-a-kind happening showcases total multimedia entertainment to its best. Catch it on myx1 Weekend, starting

WILL Go, Pussycappe's Alex Mendoza, Bars Montilla, Grace Uy, Prax Rebusia, The Blue Rats' Johnny Revo and Jonty Zerrer of Cupcon's

PLDT's owners and makers Chops Cabal and Oli Garcia with president of Smart Jamal Husin

DREAMCATCHER of the super event, Cissy Wenas, Zoe Magi-Chanel Carol, Lala Chiongbian-Ramos and Lacoste's Sigrid Villaroel

Larger Filipino lifestyle store outlet opens in Makati

MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC corps and foreign clubs, corporate executives, and lovers of all things Filipino recently gathered together to celebrate the launching of a larger and more exciting Kultura Filipina store at SM Makati.

Located at the second level of SM Makati Annex, the new store has grown to 2,797 square meters, more than double its original 822 sq m, creating a more spacious area to highlight the uniquely Filipino home decor, fashion and accessories, gifts and souvenir items Kultura has become known for.

Filipino style items known for their beauty, cultural contributions and craftsmanship also graced the event. Former First Lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos, Senior Tourism Secretary Gemma Cruz-Araneta, superior par excellence Carmen Soto and Betty Cruz were the guests of honor during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Performances of Filipino

SM RETAIL president Teresita Sy-Coson and Kultura Director Miryel

dances like the twirling scarves rendered by the Manila Folklorists Group. Percussions and celebratory dances were performed as well by the UP Kuerdo Gapi. The short program was hosted by Carlos Celdran.

Guests included Joni Antonio Mira, Greta Moorscheuer, Bong Almoza, Lizzie Zobel, Mandy Taboada, Angel Guerrero, Sandra Cardin, Tania Ledesma, Louise Casey Linda Dalhuisen, Karmen Bolgaria, Lynne Fabia, Lu Rodriguez, Desiree Sandejas, Clare Rodriguez, Dawn Mitchell, Marivic Angeleses, Muffy Moreno, Silvia Fernandez and Hazel Raws. SM officials led by SM Retail president Teresita Sy-Coson and SM Investments Corp. president Harley Sy welcomed them.

Kultura Filipina, which opened its first store in 2003, is known today as the largest Filipino lifestyle retail chain offering well-crafted products from all over the Philippines, ranging from indigenous, Chare textiles and rendered with modern design. The store also offers foreign exchange, gift wrapping, delivery and online reservation services.

The new Kultura Filipina store is in 2/L, SM Makati annex. Other outlets are at selected SM Department Stores and SM Megamall, The Block at SM City North Edsa, SM Mall of Asia and SM City Cebu.

GEMMA Cruz-Araneta, Carmen Soto, Imelda Marcos and Betty Cruz share honors during the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the relaunch of Kultura Filipina in SM Makati

BELGIAN Ambassador Christian Meeuwissen

GLORIA Dolorito, Lua Rosa Balana Cruz, Gladys Morales and Maria Emilia Portoch of the Lotis Club

Madrid designer tells how she gave up designing 'it' bags

From page C1

million accord, for one, to a huge wooden clue set with a multi-faceted stone on the market. The model comes from Brazil, but the designer has expressed interest in the local fashion-ing, according to Reyes.

"I don't like structured bags, too many are making them already," she said, also lining in her area a huge satchel made of hazelnut interwoven with cord. She has, however, one called appia, designed for laptops or tiny-footed tots. Most of the drapers are interspersed in various leathers, including a stainless called Bran, crystals, calfskin leather suede crossed to name a few.

But she doesn't see solely doing it, he's designer, Fernandez said. For now, she sees some curves. "And a good course is almost as expensive as leather."

Co Collections is sold in only a handful of outlets in Europe and the US and one in Japan. Getting to the area of Asia, the designer said, may not be too farfetched. "Maybe, who knows?"

MADRID designer Tina Fernandez (center) with Ms Corazon Quiambao (left) and Bea Reyes. The Filipinas are wearing Ms Corazon designs with leather pockets to complement Fernandez's bag collection.

FRANCES Lim, Lizzie Zobel with i-Co Collections black honeycomb leather bag, Karina Miadbe and Gina Rasos.

MARKET I exhibit bag with woven handle

SOFIA Ricalde and Karina Goulmore Perez

GLADYS Bracelet (left) and Barbara Bistro, both carrying Co Collections bags

DENIM is not fashion's divas

Denim divas

LIKE DENIM, DIVAS EXUDE attitude. And to its latest resurrection on SM, denim moves away from their only pair of weekend jeans image into life-sponsor fit for a style diva.

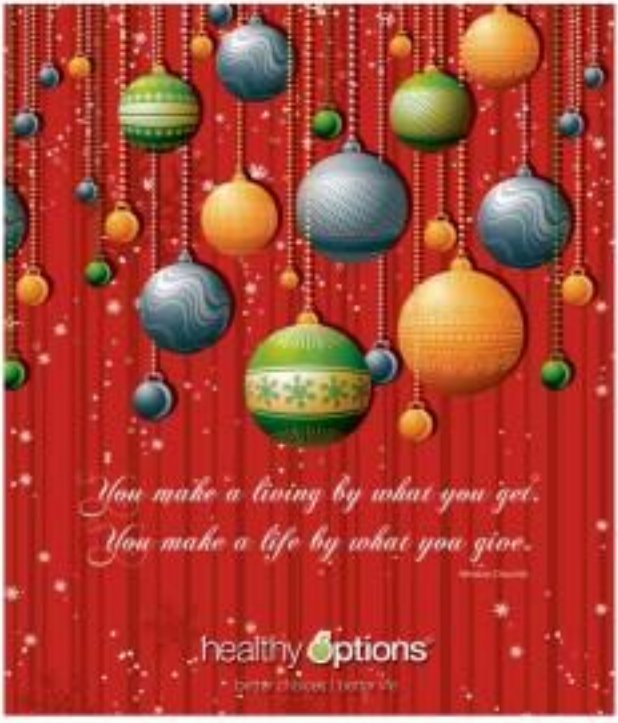
These denim pieces dare to be slim—Dolce Duke-type shorts, shorts above-the-knee skirts, and jumpers—but subtract a sophisticated edge with unexpected seams.

A bra blouse is paired with short shorts, a ruffled blouse and waist are worn with mini-skirt, two slim bright belts accent a short jumper. Denim dresses, on the other hand, go romantic with ties and ruffles and feather type designs.

Young, hot, and lots of attitude, the denim collection is available at the Girls Turns West section of all SM Department stores.

BRAVE the blue and accessories the blues.

JUMP for joy with this denim jumper that is cut.



The Season's Magical Twists You Won't Find Anywhere Else

Grand fun, excitement, and celebration await the entire family this Christmas. And it's all happening at the SM Supermalls.

We've lined up a wide array of activities to fill up everyone's heart with delight.

Giant Lantern Display

What a Pinoy Christmas without a jaw-dropping display of giant parols? In designs as colorful and bright as the Filipinos' jolly disposition.
SM City Naga, December 11

My Precious Moments at SM Christmas Village

Sam Butcher's rare figurines collectively dubbed Precious Moments, one of the world's most recognizable artworks, find their way into SM Christmas village via an exhibit sure to fascinate and inspire the child in you.
SM City Iloilo, December 10–31

Christmas Air Dancers

Cirque du Soleil inspired performances featuring air dancers doing stunts sure to take your breath away.
SM City Dasmariñas, December 19; SM City Sta. Rosa & SM City Dasmariñas, December 20
SM Supermarket Manila, December 23

Christmas Carol Musical

A wonderful re-telling of a Charles Dickens classic dramatizing the value of love, family and sharing to keep the spirit of Christmas alive in our hearts.
SM City Manila, December 13

Charlie Brown Christmas Adventure

In cooperation with Trumpets, you get to see the much loved childhood cartoon character in his fun-filled Christmas adventures.
SM City Sta. Mesa, December 13
SM City San Lazaro, December 19

Little Drummer Boy

The international Christmas icon comes to life, spreading the spirit through jolly parades and uplifting musical performances.
SM City San Lazaro, December 12
SM City Sta. Mesa, December 13

Cyberzone Christmas Mobile Craze

For gadgets galore for the tech savvy, young and old. Step into a showcase of various Nokia products and see how the brand's newest software offering – Ovi Mail – can change the way you get in touch this Christmas.
SM City Clark, SM City Cebu, SM City Naga, SM City Marikina & SM Southmall
December 18–20

Storyland Christmas

A merry musicale about a little boy named Tim and his adventures with four ghosts — Ella the Elephant, Lumpi the Lion, Sir Hoppo and Eggert. Together they discovered the true meaning of Christmas in this tale inspired by a Charles Dickens classic.
SM Southmall, December 16
SM City Fairview, December 23

For a Christmas made more meaningful, take the whole family to an SM Supermall nearest you.

HOLIDAY MALL HOURS

Extra extended mall hours
Mid-Holiday Season

Mimo Manila Malls
Fairview, Taytay Masinag, Sta. Mesa, Manila, Sucat, Bicutan, Pasig, Southmall, Muntinlupa, Las Piñas

	December 4 - 20*	10 AM to 10 PM
*except:	December 21 & 23	10 AM to 9 PM
	December 24 & 31	8 AM to 7 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 9 PM

Provincial Luzon Malls
Baguio, Clark, Marilao, Dagupan, Pangasinan, Batangas, Lipa, Lucena, Naga

	December 4 - 20*	10 AM to 10 PM
*except:	December 21	10 AM to 9 PM
	December 24 & 31	8 AM to 7 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 9 PM

SM City Cebu

	December 11 - 21	10 AM to 10 PM
	December 22 - 23	10 AM to 11 PM
	December 24 & 31	10 AM to 7 PM
	December 25 - 26	10 AM to 10 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 9 PM

Provincial Visayas Malls
Iloilo, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Bacolod

	December 19 & 20	10 AM to 9 PM
	December 21 - 22	10 AM to 10 PM
	December 23 - 24	10 AM to 9 PM
	December 25 & 31	10 AM to 7 PM
	December 26 - 30	10 AM to 10 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 9 PM

SM Supermarket Malls

	December 4 - 20*	10 AM to 9 PM
*except:	December 6 & 13	10 AM to 10 PM
	December 14 - 20	10 AM to 10 PM
	December 21 & 23	10 AM to 10 PM
	December 24 & 31	10 AM to 7 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 9 PM

SM Supermarket Pasig

	December 4 - 20*	10 AM to 10 PM
*except:	December 13 & 19	10 AM to 12 MN
	December 14 & 21	10 AM to 12 MN
	December 23	10 AM to 11 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 9 PM

SM North EDSA and SM Megamall

	December 4 - 20*	10 AM to 10 PM
*except:	December 6 & 13 & 19	10 AM to 12 MN
	December 14 & 21	10 AM to 12 MN
	December 23 & 24	10 AM to 11 PM
	December 25 & 31	8 AM to 7 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 10 PM

SM Mall of Asia

	December 4 - 20	10 AM to 11 PM
	December 6 & 13 & 19	10 AM to 12 MN
	December 14 & 21	10 AM to 12 MN
	December 24 & 31	8 AM to 7 PM
	January 1	12 NN to 10 PM

The Podium
December 4 - 20* Mon - Thu | 10 AM to 10 PM
Fri - Sun | 10 AM to 11 PM
*except: December 24 & 31 | 8 AM to 7 PM
January 1 | 12 NN to 10 PM

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Where to find the perfect hairstylist

During the holiday season, it's nice to scope the high-end salon scene

Maricel Cruz,
Beauty to the Big Apple

IN THE MANY years I've worked as beauty writer and editor, I've had my fair share of salon trips—from trendy neighborhood parlors like the down-stairs tenant in my old apartment in Quezon City to the ultra-posh spaces where salon swiffers shoot of curry you to the champers bottle, with lots of massages and hot tea in between.

I am also quite certain that if you walk into any David's, Bench Tin, Beyan Hairscapers or Jose Urban Salon, you would find a young Ken Shuta Librotan Sangcopan's more mind in-the-making: vibrant, talented, crackling with energy as he sits in a hair chair to chat with a spring in his cocktail step.

While it's easy to drop by a bustling salon at the mall or visit the village parlor, every now and then—especially during the holiday season—it's nice to scope the high-end salon scene for some options to consider splurging part of that bonus on.

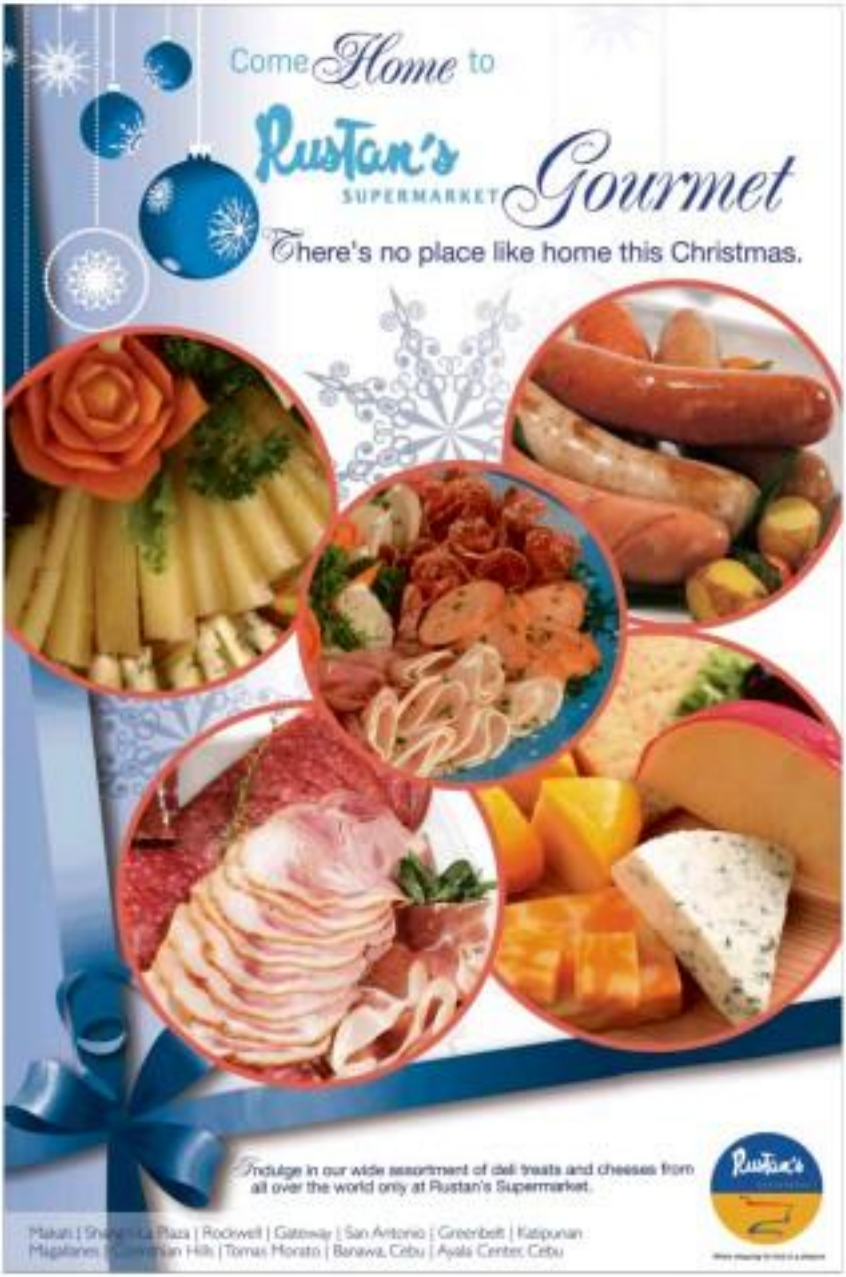
I am only happy to share three of Manila's finest tress tenderizers, along with a dozen or so why you must trust their manual expertise and book your next salon appointment with them ASAP.

Pricey but worth it

I first met Jude Hipolito and Ryan Sylvano of Universo Photo Salon's Jesica seven years ago as a young editor in her embryo. Thanks to the recommendations of the Preview girls—who know a thing or two about good style.

Over the years, I would witness the talented stylist-duo's ever good hair work. Unfortunately, they are among the very few in the industry not plagued by rumor and controversy, so their business grew from a small salon in Alabang and a store in Quezon City to a flourishing home for great hair at Rustan's Makati

>>HERE 12



Gifts of beauty and wellness for Christmas

Chanel Precision

Nothing is as luxurious as starting your day with Chanel's bubblegum hue. Before reaching or reading the day, this gift will remind the recipient of you. How to take your time out for her self? These products will make her do it. Best of all, she'll love you even more.

Dermatologica's Skin Hydrating Booster

This is a complete face and in one is great for those on the go. It's low fuss and is clinically recorded to boost moisture to level. It will fit perfectly in clear kit. Dermatologica is certified and tested brand. Even those who have the most sensitive skin will love this product.

IT'S DECEMBER: TIME TO FINISH YOUR Christmas list. As the days go by, the stores will get more and more congested. To be honest, I've wandered and shopped high and low looking for the perfect gift for my friends, co-workers and family. I've been to 168, Rustans and most home and toy stores you can think of. Luckily, I'm all most done and for those very special to me, I must confess I have purchased most of their gifts at Rustans. They do have items my loved ones would enjoy, plus, I don't have to go far. It also helps that they wrap the gifts. Here are some beauty products I think those who don't want to think too much on our choices about what's out there may want to consider giving. Personally, I wouldn't mind getting doubles of these myself.

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

La Prairie's Gold Elusive Line Filler

Give a bottle of La Prairie and she'll know you love her. At least that's what I think. It can be pricey, but it delivers. In fact, Gold Elusive Line Filler is a great base for makeup. Her only direct fill unwanted lines, it minimizes by providing vitamin E, which acts as antioxidant. Instantly, it will give you youthful skin. What I personally love the most is how it makes my skin glow. In fact, she is a perfect gift to one's self. Every woman should check out La Prairie's creams and experience what it's all about. Be careful though, because you'll want it.

Market! Market! Takes Green Living To A Higher Level

It all started from an idea to beautify a dull space. Instead of the usual decorative foliage used by commercial centers, Market! Market! transformed its roof deck in a fully-functional organic garden – an oasis in the urban heart scape.

Market! Market!'s organic garden hosts a variety of plants – cucumber, string beans, cabbage, mustard, linguini and oregano – and is a fine example of green practices at work. The mall reused scrap materials, such as old wooden barrels for the garden's trees, discarded GI pipes as garden trellis, old paint pails as garden pots, and excavated top soil and manure sand from construction sites of the mall and nearby farms duly tested by the garden to be. Natural methods are also employed to care for the garden. Fertilizers come from the mall's toilet waste management facility containing of discarded vegetable peelings from the mall's restaurants while pesticides are made of natural garlic-powdered soaps.

The Market! Market! green roof initiative is a shining example of Greenology – Ayala Malls' commitment to an eco-friendly lifestyle and sustainable living. Greenology puts to the fore Ayala Land's green philosophy, which is reflected in the design and operations of its malls. The green roof contributes to energy savings by reducing the solar heat gain inside that portion of the mall, thereby reducing the air-conditioning load, in addition to energy efficiency and aesthetic enhancement, the project also promotes urban agriculture through organic farming. The green roof produces green, healthy and all-natural vegetables that make its way to Market! Market! employees for a minimal fee. Proceeds of the sale are used to acquire new seeds to continuously replenish the organic garden. This amazing feat Market! Market!'s green roof will be around for many years to come.

NARS Makeup

At NARS Great Effects, Francois Nars has come up with a look with fifteen or six friends with their fave NARS product. Every girl loves makeup. If she doesn't yet, then it's time to get her her blush in Orgasm, or a light shade lippy. For those who have already discovered the magic of makeup, then this blush eye shadow set Explore Romance is something they'll love to own.

Delicious Almond Candle

For families, it is time to get a gift for the home. What a perfect way to make a house a home by lighting up a candle. I love this particular scent since after a long day, it actually relaxes me and also makes me think of happy thoughts.

Headgear by Annick Goutal

The scent is both mysterious and elegant. Drawing inspiration from the mandolin, it is a mixture of feminine and masculine notes. In ancient times, people believed that particular plants held some mysterious love potion and acted out a fertility love ritual. Today, women are only ready to feel good but also, they have the power to bewitch someone's memory in an. I think this scent has that power. It has variants for both men and women, a great gift to couples.

In celebration of Philippine Daily Inquirer's 24th anniversary

Discover the artistry and savor the exquisite creations of the best Filipino chefs, bakers and cooks as they showcase the

24 Best Desserts

4-6 December 2009
SM Mall of Asia Atrium

An
INQUIRER LIFESTYLE
and
SM MALL OF ASIA
No Other Mall Comes Close
experience

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OPI Holiday Collection

I love OPI! My love shade of the moment is Give Me Moore. In fact, this is the polish we use for Manage By Us since it stays long and dries fast. Any girl would love to get a bottle. If she's conservative, then pick a light shade. The more adventurous she is, the darker you go.

Where to find the perfect hairstylist

From page B1

[illegible] and SM Mall of Asia in Pasay [556-8611].

But you'll probably fall off your chair upon hearing that a haircut with reporte costs a whopping P5,000. That's approximately $108.86, a price fairly competitive if you live in a metropolitan city abroad. However by Manila standards, that price can be quite a pinch.

It also costs as much, or even more, for a color treatment with Schiano.

But here's why the Katrin duo could be your go-to team for the perfect cut and spin, on color work: Hipolito prides himself for his precision-honing training at Mikel Salmon; a two-hour haircut will have you sitting, standing as your tresses are curries, nicely accentuated. So precise are his technique and shaping that you won't need a haircut for another four months.

Expertly trained Schiano, on the other hand, works in creamy pigments to enhance, or even transform, dull and drab locks. Her touch is subtle yet vibrant and beautiful, perfectly complementing one's skintones. (For extra oomph, try the salon's spirilizers coloring at P600 to match dyed strands.)

Photogenic hair

I consider Louis Phillip too, stylist and owner of the salon of his namesake (tel. 8564686, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig; 7214666, Greenhills, San Juan), part of my beauty entourchosen in Cosmo.

My editor at the time urged me to expand my horizons and try anything and everything short of being poked and electrocuted by vanity—which explained the ubiquitous lip-dye stain, cream-to-ash eyeshadow, and an absurd chinstrap amongst with the help of some nurses and some rods I just couldn't.

The thing about him is that his haircut and color...especially color...are be very intimidating at first, and not to mention, expensive. Even I, quite the "veteran" in this field, still manage to cringe at the price (hair, My mom reminds me, prided not one, not two, but three different colored pieds expertly distributed throughout my crown, plus Kris's trademark tress-lavering wasn't be fast.

However, I only have photographs of me just myself for friends who look great on their blogs and Facebook. I still realize you don have to only to find fear to be the common denominator for great looking strands, which only goes to show how the hair industry-trained stylist is able to translate his unique brand of beauty to those who are open-minded and willing to have fun with their hair.

Classy and classic

When a sense of calm and equilibrium is what you crave for your fractured mane, it's time to fall into the cleansing principles of Lorenzo Hebert of the French Provost Xtenda at The Net [tel. 8158855, 3868565].

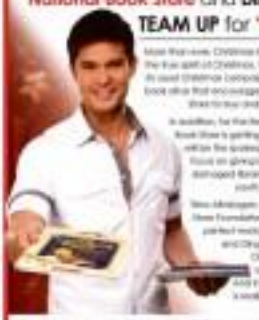
As for styling, classics never go out of style, and I've also come to realize that one could learn plenty from the French. You'll be inspired how warm and accommodating they actually are, and that they're very much like us Filipinos.

I first met Hebert over the summer and tried his trademark chin-length bob that many ridiculously have also come to love. I love Lorenzo, not only because he's personally upbeat to test managers, cuts and blow-dries your hair himself but the chic attitude there) but also because he is one delightful reminder that the salon can truly be a happy place, a refreshing retreat from the hustle and bustle of the new-even home city.

Ad Astrid a beauty question or [illegible] *at* http://thesystemsbigbypie.com, *or visit her blog at* http://bylittlemiss.com.

SIT BACK and relax in one of Louis Phillip Ruiz Salon's Indian designed chairs.

National Book Store and Dingdong Dantes, TEAM UP for "Project Aklat"



More than ever, Christmas this year is a time to give, and in the true spirit of Christmas, National Book Store is bringing its usual Christmas campaign in favor of "Project Aklat". It took other first and widget-level patterns of fashion/style

[illegible] is positive, but that for these to work at peace, National Book Store is getting an endorser, Dingdong Dantes will be the spokesperson for the project which will focus on giving books to the community, getting estranged libraries rebuilt and giving the millions youth a chance to get an education.

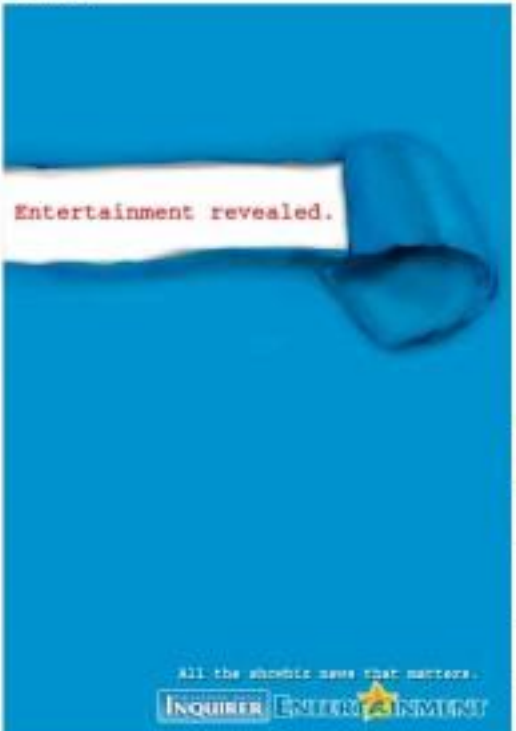
Nina Montemayor, Chairman of the National Book Store Foundation points out that "It was really a perfect match between National Book Store and Dingdong. Both our foundation and Dingdong's Yes Pinoy Foundation support educational for the youth, and in the case, our working together is really a case of the sun or the pure meeting a bigger whole."

Montemayor also shares that the meeting with Dantes and other presentations. During an autograph signing for Dantes' broadcast at one of the national book store branches, the National Book Store Foundation found out about the advocacies of the Yes Pinoy Foundation and National Book Store Founding Chairman Socorro C. Ramos decided to donate 1,000 school supply study kits to Dingdong and the Yes Pinoy Foundation.

With so much that needs to be done and so much that can be done, everyone involved with "Project Aklat" finds themselves excited over the prospect of national book store teaming up with Dingdong Dantes and his Yes Pinoy Foundation. Montemayor adds: "A lot of people want to help but don't really know how. So maybe they can rally behind this and they don't know where to bring their donations. 'Project Aklat' is really a perfect opportunity for everyone to help. And imagine what a difference we can make if every single one of us just contributed one book."

Perhaps it was perfect timing or perhaps it was just fate, but after all that happened, it was not difficult for National Book Store and Dantes to find themselves working together towards a common goal. What is very clear however is that at only P30, it takes so little to make a difference in a person's life. Text Tulong Start.

National Book Store's "Project Aklat" runs until December 31, 2009. Interested for to line up the P30 may buy purchase one volume or all textbooks/non-fiction bestsellers collection. Follow National Book Store on Facebook and Twitter for exclusive offers.



makro
Christmas Super Specials

5+1
AMERICAN HERITAGE Waffle Maker P699

5+1
WMPEX Deluxe Dry Iron P389

5+1
PROTECH 2 Coil Electric Stove P1,119

10+1
EUREKA Table Top P749

PHILIPS Clock Radio with Mobile Charger AJ4200 P2,990

DAEWOO Portable DVD P3,999

AMERICAN HOME Air Conditioner 1.5HP Compact Size P6,499

FUNAI 32" LCD TV P8,999

MARKS Desktop Dispenser HDC P4,699

4 in 1 P229.75
Photo Frames 5 in 1 P299.75

Visit us for MORE EXCITING OFFERS!!

Affordable gift ideas for 'tween girls

FASHION 21's budget beauty packs for Christmas

THERE IS ALWAYS THAT IN-BETWEEN age when one is too old for toys but too young for perfume.

The girls age eight to 14? I can help you there. Eight percent of girls say fun-themed nail makeup. Buying these age-appropriate beauty treats is a big mistake as they will tire of them quickly. They are not allowed to wear them all the time or the goods expire quickly. Worse yet, certain ingredients may be too harsh for their skin.

"Over-the-counter? All-natural? Makeup made just for them?

MAKEOVER 911

Kenny Sales

HBC chief of staff Alice Amy Herbieto grew up spending her free time in the research and development laboratory of Herbalera Beauty Center's factory, which her predecessor Aphalo Herbieto self-taking skincare, face and cosmetics, Skinwhite, Bioblush and VC23 products.

She remembers how it was as a child not to be allowed to wear makeup like she still within her reach. So she made it her personal mission to create a line of hypoallergenic skincare products that would be suitable for children and 'tweens. That line of compact cosmetics was formulated and aptly named Alice.

Alice hypoallergenic Eyelash Curler (so small and compact it fits into pencilcase), Pressed Powder comes in three skin matching shades—Skin Light, Honeybeige and Natural Beauty—is an eco-friendly cardboard package and with good-sized mirror). Beauty Book is palette including powder, blush, lipstick, lip contrast set. Dare Open a Tone, Happily Ever After and Wish Upon a Heart. Lacquer Lip Creator is nude cupcake-looking and Flavor Gloss-in Pink Dream and Chocolate-y. Eyeshadow Lip and Cheek Set three shades. Kids love this because it gives them natural-toned shades and just-between lips so select parents and teachers can't tell they have any thing on. And Flavor Lip Gloss-Fun are strawberry pink, plum and coconut-ice and sky skin tones.

They're very FDA-approved.

My personal favorites from that line Beverly Cheek Tint; Matte Liquid Foundation and Age Defense Pressed Powder.

Treat

Fashion 21's budget beauty pack for Christmas comes for only P199. It contains full-size plum lipstick that suits most Asian skin tones, translucent pressed powder and a full-size black eyeliner/kaya pencil.

Note: You have to buy pads or powder brush for the pressed powder separately. A great exchange gift idea.

E-mail the author at kennysales@yahoo.com

PICTURE YOUR FAMILY HOLIDAY IN HONG KONG!
...AND GET A CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE HONG KONG WINTERFEST!

HONG KONG WinterFest

LIVE IT. LOVE IT!

STCQC batch '85 launches concert and CD

THE ST. THERESA'S COLLEGE QUEZON CITY Batch '85 will launch "Recipes for Life: Food For the Soul" Concert and CD on Dec. 5, 3:30 and 7 p.m., at Abelardo Hall, U.P. CLOPE Bldg., 937 Quezon Ave., corner Roosevelt Ave., Quezon City.

The Theresian Alumnae Chorale, under the musical direction of Aji Mateo (Batch '85), and artistic direction of Vera Bailey Alcaraz (Batch '75 and the Philippines Icon-elephant Singers, soprano Bianca Banzon-Jose and violinist Mayra Lucretia (Batch '85) will perform inspirational and classical works.

"Recipes for Life: Food for the Soul" Concert and CD Launch is a fund-raising event for St. Theresa's College QC community and St. Theresa's Alumnae Association beneficiaries and projects.

For inquiries, call the STCQC Alumnae Association at 7400111 and look for Rose Bautista.

PEN holds writers' congress

The Philippine Center of the International PEN (Poets and Playwrights, Essayists, Novelists) will hold its annual conference Dec. 5, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at Bulwagang Pambansang Alagad ng Sining, Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Theme is "Sino Winning in the Philippines?" (tel. 5207000).

Keynote address will be delivered by poet Ricardo de Ungria, commissioner of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. The Jose Rizal Lecture will be delivered by National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera.

Convenors include National Artists Jose Joya and Elmer S. Ordonez.

Supporters of the conference are CCP Washington Sycip, Dan Fajardo (Angara Haruro), and UM Multi, Wilcox Technologies-Indonesia, National Book Store, Goldenbell Book Shop, De La Salle University, and The Association of the University of Santo Tomas.

UST literature prize carries 25

Literatus, the longest-running campus literary contest in the country, will hold its 55th week to night Dec. 3, 6 p.m., at the Plaza Mayor of the University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila.

Organized by The Varsitarian, the 55-year-old offers student cognac of UST, Literatus is and awardees combining "UST" and "Literatus") will present the winners of the English and Filipino divisions of its poetry, fiction, essay and drama contests. Also to be awarded is the UST Pascher's Literary Prize.

Highlights in the Pampagit-Ingkong prize given to flagship poet Rio Alma and acclaimed Ilocano essayist-historian Ben Farnas-Benchmen for lifetime achievement in Philippine literature.

To top the awards night, The Varsitarian will present a light-and-sound three-retro display to the tune of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" at the UST Quadrangle.

SEAIR's Batanes Winter promo

SeaAir Asia International (SEAIR) offers a special limited online offer.

Visit www.FlyAsia.com and get a 10-percent discount on flights to Batanes when you book and pay for your flight from Dec. 1-25. Just type "batanes-winter2009" in the promo code field upon booking. Travel period is Dec. 1-Jan. 31, 2010.

SEAIR flies to Batanes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays on 27 flights per day to Basco (Calaguas), and one round flights every Sunday and Wednesday to El Nido. Visit www.FlyAsia.com or call 8388 0000.

Concert at The Peak

On Intimate Concert at The Peak this set at The Peninsula Manila is today to Dec. 8, 7-9 p.m. Featured are the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra with conducting Stefan Hoedel-Boyd, Rachael, Rachelle Canadian, Bo Sze-sze, Camille Lopez Molina, Dena Fernandez and the University of the Philippines Concert Chorus.

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Congratulations Manny.
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An amazing breakthrough from Nikon

Art Deco watch designed for women

'Asia will outpace the world in luxury consumption'

By Cheche V. Moral

IN THE US, IT WAS recently reported pre-return jeans brands have slashed their prices significantly, signifying not just the backlash on this garments that used to sell upward of $300/pair, but also the result of an economy that's hit the ditch.

In Asia, however, there's no sign of that happening soon as premium jeans still sell at full price. "There's still demand for them," said Frank Low, managing director of the Kuala Lumpur-based Luxury Concepts, distributor of several luxury brands in the region, including Hermes and Swiss watch brands like Ores and Technomarine.

"Asia will outpace the rest of the world in luxury consumption," he added. "There's a lot of growth in this part of the world."

Low is also promoter of Bedat & Co., the high end Swiss watch company which Luxury Concepts acquired recently from the Gucci Group. Last week, he launched Bedat & Co. with Boutet's Corporate Corp. in Manila.

"The luxury market is always the last to recover [But in date], China is a big consumer so it's always growing. The prices of luxury watches aren't going down. In my industry, it's still very strong so it appeals to a different mindset."

Bedat & Co. (pronounced BED-duh) was founded in 1998 by the brothers and son team of Simone and Christian Bedat. Simone was also cofounder of another watch brand, Raymond Weil. The Bedats set out to create sophisticated watches by women using Art Deco styles.

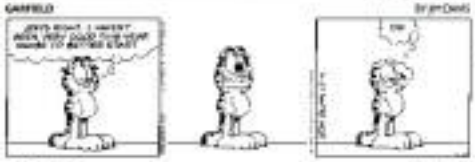
The Bedats named each collection after a number, a concept that is "easily understood" as numbers have either universal or personal meaning, according to Tiffany Carrier-Millon, Bedat & Co.'s PR director who worked with the Bedats before their departure from the company in 2006. It was also as a way to name the families of shapes for each collection.

Art Deco not just because of the shapes and designs but also in spirit," Carrier-Millon said. "It's very avant-garde because we do things; we mix diamonds and stainless steel. It's like wearing your jeans with your diamonds. So that's very Art Deco."

When the Bedats introduced their first collections, the No. 1 and No. 7, they were a huge hit and are still the bestsellers today. No. 1 follows the common shape (somewhat rounded and bulging) or is curved at 6 o'clock and 12 o'clock. The No. 7 is more rectangular, and curved at 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock. The two collections have since undergone different interpretations.

In Asia, the No. 6 collection has been a favorite, as it is deemed an auspicious number by the Chinese. It also mimics the company logo, or two B's facing each other. "It's also an homage to industry symbol," Carrier-Millon noted. No. 8 is cushion-shaped and has a very vintage feel to it.

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS



A. LIPAK — BY JOS. ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH. JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOVEHUNGTS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGCO

JAMES BOND

DRYAKE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PABALINAS

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

TULOOK — BY HARM COLL

BEH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

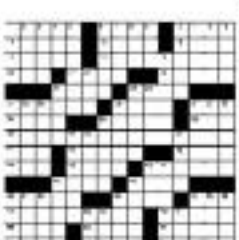
ATOMO AND WEEDY — BY VINA GARCIA LLANO

KIBO MACHINE — BY MANDI ABRERA

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

		4		6	2	8		
	9							
3		7		1				4
				5				3
8		2				9		6
9				4				
2				9		1		5
							6	
		1		7	8	4		

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and progress at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	2	6	5	7	3	8	1	9
3	7	9	2	8	1	5	4	6
8	1	5	9	4	6	7	2	3
1	9	2	6	3	4	6	7	5
6	3	7	1	5	2	4	9	8
5	8	4	6	9	7	1	3	2
7	6	1	3	2	5	9	8	4
9	4	3	7	6	8	2	5	1
2	5	8	4	1	9	3	6	7

Art Deco watch designed for women

From page E2

SYMBOLISM prosperity and good luck. Our this 8 collection is wildly popular in Asia.

ULTIMATUM limited-edition No. 3 style

TIFFANY Cumiso: Milan, Bedat & Co. PR director

There's also his 1 (square and curved at 2 o'clock and 9 o'clock) and No. 2 (oval shaped).

"These numbers can have individual meanings. They may stand for an anniversary. The declination of the shapes can be as varied as the interpretations of the numbers," she said.

Bedat & Co. is in the same category as predominantly ladies brands like Piaget, Cartier, Chopard and Franck Muller. "Unlike other men's brands that only reduce the size or add diamonds to a man's style and call it a ladies watch, Bedat & Co. is specifically designed for women," Low said. At Bedat & Co., only 20 percent make up for men's styles.

"We don't pretend to be a fashion brand. We're keen on our Swiss heritage, the timelessness of Swiss watchmaking know-how," Cartier Milon said, stressing that Bedat & Co. is still Geneva-based and 100-percent Swiss even as it's now owned by a Malaysian firm.

"People think a lot before buying and they want value," she added. "We're not big on advertising campaign so what you get in the value of what you're paying for. It's something you can pass to the next generation." At Bonnie's Makati's tallest "Well, as only store for Bedat & Co. is about P162,000.

Low has high hopes for the Philippine market. "The Philippines is not small. Tod's has been here for 15 years, in Singapore only five years ago. Bonnie Swiss has been here 12 years, it wasn't in Singapore until five years ago. So I see a lot of potential."

MODERN classic style that can go from day to night (left). Above, the No. 8 collection is distinctly round and cushion-shaped.

JOAO MANUEL COSTA ANTUNES, Director of Macau Government Tourist Office welcomes the Philippines delegate to the 5th HOTEL EXPO 2009 MACAU recently held on November 13-14, 2009. Together with him is the Hotel& Restaurant Association of the Philippines representative, Atty. Eugene T. Yap, General Manager of Bayview Park Hotel Manila

NATTY Alexis Bledel, Kate Johnson, Rob Kralik and Maria Garcia de la Basilla

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Top Spanish brand unveils 2010 Spring/ Summer collection

MANGO Resort

MANGO PRESENTED ITS MEN'S AND women's collections for the Spring/Summer 2010 season at Cuja Magica in Madrid last Nov. 11.

Attending the much-anticipated fashion event were Scarlett Johansson, Dave Elvington, Natty Abascal, Gari Lapique, Empress Shantiara de Borja, Isabel Sartorius, Simonetta Gomez Acebo, Lulu Medina, Monica Cruz, Bruno Lorenzo, Carlos Carpintero, Fernando de Izaguirre and Maria Garcia de la Basilla, Ana Rodriguez, Amaya Shannon, Olivia de Borbon, Mosalo de la Rosa, Alvaro de Marichalar, Alejandro de Borja, Leticia Dolera, Florian Sweny, Anne Igartiburu, Javier Sanchez Ovejero Dominga Isak Aiello, Mango chairman, welcomed the numerous celebrities and guests.

Johansson and Hemingway are the stars of the Mango new logos.

After modeling on the catwalk were Jon Kortajarena and Hiroko Grimmalo, the son of Paulo Dominguin, and José Coronado.

After the show, Mango held a party also at Cuja Magica, featuring vocalist singer Estrella de Pass. Cocktails were served by Cantina Sopenar Sin Sera.

"I love working with Mango," said Johansson. "This is the second campaign I have done with them. The photographer, Mario Sorrenti, makes me feel very comfortable. His sessions are great fun. I see Mango as a casual firm, with lots of combinations of garments, fresh and youthful. My most-worn are jeans and T-shirts. I normally wear flat-soled shoes, because I live in New York and you walk a lot there, although I love heels. I have so many pairs. They are my favorite accessory."

SCARLETT Johansson

"For traveling, I usually wear versatile garments, blazers, boots, especially in black. So me, the main thing is to feel comfortable with myself."

Dave Elvington's first grandchild of Brian Mulroney expressed delight at her collaboration with Mango. "I love the collections and they are varied enough to dress for any time of day," she said. "I already know Madrid and I have also been to Barcelona. I love Spain and I feel at home when I am here."

Coronado modeled the men's collection.

"At the moment, I am concentrating on my fashion and [communication degree, which I combine with the world of fashion," he said. "I am just starting to discover it and I really like it. I don't stop traveling and meeting new people. I am really pleased to be able to participate in this catwalk. I feel comfortable with Mango clothing, since it is quite similar to my own style and the sizes also fit me really well."

The ABAP Governors – Presidents Philippines & Japan Telecommunications executives collect the Advertising and Campaign Award at the 21st Philippine Advertising Congress. Pictured (left to right) is Jojo De Jesus, Vice President Marketing, Globe Telecommunications; David Guerrero, Chairman & Chief Creative Officer, BBDO Guerrero; Presidents Philippines John Hain, Vice President Corporate Brand and Communications, Globe Telecommunications; Omar Rojas, Group Account Director, BBDO Guerrero (Presidents Philippines); Fe Gandeza, Head of Corp. BBDO Guerrero; Presidents Philippines; Lyn Sarte, Account Director, Eric Pacaldaan, Account Manager, BBDO Guerrero; Presidents Philippines; Brandie Tan, Head of Art, BBDO Guerrero; Presidents Philippines

LOLA LEADS THE WAY AT PHILIPPINE ADCONGRESS & ASIAN DIGITAL MEDIA AWARDS

Work from a breakthrough integrated campaign for Bayan Telecommunications, Lola Series was named higher than any other campaign in the show at the 21st Philippine Advertising Congress in Cebu this on Saturday (7 November). BBDO Guerrero (Presidents Philippines) campaign has been held up across the Asia Pacific region as an example of excellence in integrated communications. BBDO will also take a Gold Award as last week's Asian Digital Media Awards in Beijing, China.

"It's particularly gratifying for us to have our work recognized by leaders in the industry as setting the standard in integrated and digital communications. As the success of Bayan's 'Lola Series' campaign has shown, marketers can reap huge benefits when they leverage the power of digital channels to complement traditional BBDO Guerrero (Presidents Philippines) CEO, Paul Rowbotham. "With this year's Philippine Advertising Congress and the Asia Pacific Digital Media Awards featured at the effectiveness of campaigns that bring compelling video and offline channels deeply rooted to brand passion. The age of relying on stand-alone message-based campaigns is over. Success requires us to understand how we can engage consumers in the most relevant places, and that is via messaging on online channels."

Bayan's 'Lola Series' campaign has been enormously successful, generating five-media impressions worth six times the value of paid media. Customer inquiries also rose by 600% and the customer base went up by 30%, despite having less than 10% of the competitor's advertising budget.

The award at the Philippine Advertising Congress for the 'Integrated' campaign rounded off a strong showing for BBDO Guerrero (Presidents Philippines) at the award ceremony, with Chairman and Chief Creative Officer, David Guerrero stating: "I wouldn't trade our body of work for anyone else's! We were recognized for our ability to work in integrated ways to help our clients, and for every creative team. The more effective our efforts have been, the more we have always known', the team work between the brand and its agency. Telecoms is the lighthouse for innovation in integrated and digital channels. Guerrero commented, "Over the course of the congress, speaker after speaker said that integrated campaigns are the future. But integrated campaigns don't come into existence by accident." Asked what the key elements of success were, Guerrero stated: "A great client and strong partners that could bring the campaign alive like Fox Lola Series' successors Megan Young and PR agency partners. Ocean Marketing were critical to delivering a campaign of this calibre."

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Galleria

New watch collection for women

SWISS LUXURY TIMEpiece brand Technomarine has released the UF6 Colors collection.

Made with stainless steel and fiber band, The UF6 Colors collects functional sophistication with its marriage of pearl dial and hint of color.

It is water resistant up to 200 feet, has a stainless steel case and deployment buckle, a sapphire crystal and scratch-free treatment, and silicone strap.

The UF6 Colors speaks to the artistically stylish on-the-go woman who has perfected the balance of form and function.

Five women model the four-model environmentalist Blanca Amanda Ghisolfo.

She's a vegetarian and organic food lover. Her children are growing up on organic food.

For exercise, she said she does smiling and running.

Rep. Sally Ponce-Enrile (Cagayan) also does a lot of exercise. She plays tennis at least three times a week.

She enjoys wearing big sporty watches because it can be worn anywhere and with any thing.

Though her work calls for her to wear entirely suits and heels, she uses modern accessories to update her style.

Angel Jacob said simplicity is the key. She described her style as "a holistic mode of being simple."

The actress, TV host and mother said her style is "as simple as can be, with little spoiler."

Lou Schuler juggles her time between family, hosting "Morning at ANC," working as Metro Society magazine, and recently acting in theater.

She recently got into dance as a form of exercise.

Ruby Gan, fashion entrepreneur, award-winning power lifter, marathon runner, and triathlete, said UF6 Colors fits her lifestyle perfectly.

She explained: that the watch's "big face makes telling time a lot easier." The rubber strap, she added, "is perfect for my active lifestyle."

Technomarine is available at Technomarine Shop, ship Store G/F Ermita's 3, Ayala Center Makati, 7290280, Technomarine Boutique 2/F Trilogy, Quezon City, 8915622, Technomarine Boutique 2/F SM Megamall Bldg. A, Ortigas Center, Pasig, 6317681.

RUBY Gan

Editor Bernie G. Velarde

ENTERTAINMENT

Mobile text [redacted] | Website [redacted] | E-mail [redacted]

Chinese becomes Mega

By Rupert Sun Diego Jr.

IT TOOK TWO HOURS AND A half to transform singer-actress Shaina Magdayao into a Filipino-Chinese for Joel Lamangan's "Mana Po 6: A Mother's Love," an entry in this month's Metro Manila Film Festival.

Makeup artist Tonyo Serrano experimented on several styles for the actress already known as the "Megastar" in local showbiz.

"We wanted an authentic look," Shaina told Inquirer two months ago, on the first shooting day in a five-star hotel.

She went on a shopping spree at the Shanghai Tang boutique in Hong Kong last August. "I've always loved the store, but knowing that I am buying costumes for a movie made it more exciting," she said.

Shaina bought a few dresses and scraps, but confessed that she had bought silk robes and pajamas from in the past.

"I adore all things Chinese," she said. "There was a time years ago when I was framed on the Cultural Revolution. All my books were on Mao Tse Tung."

Among her other favorite books are Amy

(14 MORE)

No wedding? It's OK—Pidol

By Marinel R. Cruz

COMEDY KING DOLPHY SAID HE HAS come to accept the likelihood that his real singer-actress Diana Zubiri, his partner of over 20 years (and with whom he has two daughters), may never get to tie the knot.

At 76, Dianne married doctor Mendozo Tetteng here, whom she dated with for seven years. They have a daughter, singer-actress Rayille. In 1990, Dianne eloped with Dolphy, 30 years but re-unite. They have two kids, Nicole and Zia.

In 2005, Dianne filed for annulment which hit a big snag early this year.

"I don't think there's anything we can do about it now," Dolphy said during a media gathering for his latest movie "Nobody, Nobody... But Juan," a Metro Manila Film Festival entry.

(SEE P.2)

Shang

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December 15, Tue, 4:30 pm
December 16, Wed, 5:30 pm
December 17, Thurs, 6 pm
December 18, Fri, 6:30 pm
December 19, Sat, 6 pm
December 20, Sun, 6 pm
December 21, Mon, 5 pm
December 22, Tue, 6 pm
December 23, Wed, 6 pm
December 24, Thurs, 5 pm
December 25, Sat, 4 pm
December 27, Sun, 4 pm
December 28, Mon, 4 pm
December 29, Tue, 4 pm
December 30, Thurs, 4 pm
December 31, Fri, 5 pm
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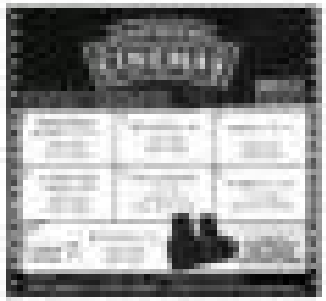

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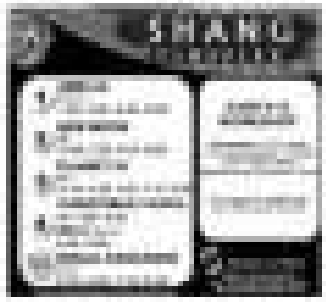

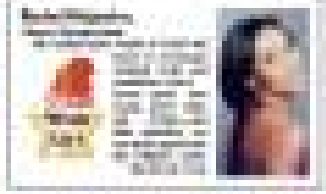

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No working? It's OK—Pelosi

Fergie recalls days as a 'failure'

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Popular Kapuso joins TV5

PAOLO BEDIONES IS THE first major Kapuso talent to join the new TV5, under the management of Manny Pangilinan.

Bedi nes, who recently won a Star Award as Best Reality Program Host for GMA 7's "Survivor," will be the new face of TV 5's news and public affairs division.

Apart from being an on-air talent, Bedi nes will also take on a network job, overseeing programming and content.

Needless to say the next edition of "Survivor" in June 2010 will have a look for a new host.

Reported Sun Ehaps JC

1995 Pea once did a country fair show where five people stunned up.

Fergie recalls days as a 'failure'

LOS ANGELES—BLACK EYED PEAS vocalist Fergie has come a long way from singing in front of five people, on a stage located beside a barn full of pigs.

The 34-year-old California native—who often juggles a role career as a singer and actress, and is married to actor Josh Duhamel—recalled some of her trying times when she fronted the all-girl group Wild Orchid.

"I remember shaming up for a radio show," Fergie narrated, "I was at a country fair ... I think five people showed up. Right next to us was the barn filled with pigs ... I felt bad like a failure. I remember being in tears and thinking, 'what am I doing wrong? I realized later ... I was supposed to go through things in life before I could achieve success."

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rahm T. Alipala

Fergie, who was 11 when she joined Wild Orchid, continued looking back on the early days: "Our idols at the time were Ti Vegas and TLC. My mom used to drive me to rehearsals. At 18, I moved out of my parents' home and moved to Hollywood with one of the girls in the group. We had big dreams. I didn't have any doubts. We made a great record for that time. It's pressed of the sounds are dad done. Silv-ranked just as hard as the Black Eyed Peas but without the same success. I was in Wild Orchid for 11 years."

Hip-hop fun

Fergie stressed her gratitude to the Hollywood Californian will Lara, Filipino-American upbringing, and Mexican-American Taboo—for taking her in during the recording of the "Elephunk" album in 2003. "I was a fan of them before I joined the band," she recounted.

"I bought a ticket to their concert in 1998," she told of the band. "I've always loved hip-hop but not only were the Black Eyed Peas hip-hop, they also had a live band and they didn't dress in typical baseball cap, sneakers. They were fashion-forward. Even their dancing was very unique and abstract. They were socially conscious. Yet they were funny, too. I could relate with all of those things."

She said with a smile: "When I saw them live in concert, I told myself, I want to work with them one day!"

Now, Fergie is not only working with her fellow Californians will Lara, Filipino-American upbringing, and Mexican-American Taboo—for taking her in during the recording of the "Elephunk" album in 2003. "I was a fan of them before I joined the band," she recounted.

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She said with a smile: "When I saw them live in concert, I told myself, I want to work with them one day!"

Now, Fergie is not only working with her fellow Peas, but also with Rachel Dog-Lewis, Nicole Richie, Penelope Cruz, Judi Dench, Marion Cotillard, Sophie Lowe and Kate Hudson in "Nine," the film adaptation of the Tony award-winning musical. It was loosely inspired by Fellini's 1963 Oscar winner, "8 ½," about a filmmaker, Guido, and his artistic and personal crises. "If you told me years ago that I would be in a film with the cast and be directed by Rob Marshall, I would have never believed it," she said.

Fergie is billed in "Nine" as Stacy Ferguson... for cause as an actress. "The reason that I'm using two separate names is because a lot of times when singers do films, audiences have trouble not seeing them on their previous

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Editor Bronnie G. Velarde

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Ayala Malls

A Jolina good time

From page G2

HUGH found these tin soldiers in a local bazaar.

our Tagaytay home."

Every year, the kitchen drawers and fridge boxes in Jolina are filled with all sorts of specialties shipped up by mom.

"There's ox tail, spaghetti, ham, queso de bola and hot chocolate," Ads recommends.

Christmas isn't complete without mom's pasta dish.

"It's the best spaghetti I've ever tasted," Jolina says with pride. "Since my sister Mel, niece Hannah and I don't know how to cook, we just help my mom set the table."

Although there've moved houses half a dozen times, they've maintained their New Year rituals as each new home, says Jolina's dad Joe.

"Before the clock strikes 12 on Dec. 31, I turn on the radio full blast. My youngest son Jonathan and I prepare the fireworks and turn on all the lights and sound."

Alfred's mom, for her part, would throw coins tossed up during the entire year's all over the house.

"Well, all wonderful, on the floor for this year," Jolina says. "We'll fight to get the most coins for days."

The rest of the year, the 1,200 sq. m. house remains just as luxurious. The Greek structure is complemented by an eclectic design—Hispanic crystals and Hindu figures are displayed side by side with Filipino antique pieces.

A cherished piece is the Last Supper sculpture crafted by a Pamer sister. Dad's paintings are displayed alongside art works by Angela Ildefonso (molo@yahoo.com) and others.

Jolina's best spot is the terrace, with its breathtaking views of the San Mateo mountains and Rodriguez plains.

"I like lounging out at the terrace...meditating, thinking and even writing," she notes. "I love watching the sunrise and sunset and I go stargazing at night."

So the best spot to pay a visit she says.

"I feel closer to God looking at the mountains and the sky," she cites.

She has plenty to be thankful for, Jolina adds. "I've been in the business for 20 years. I wouldn't have accomplished all this without my family. They are truly central to inspiration. They're also workaholics by ade with me."

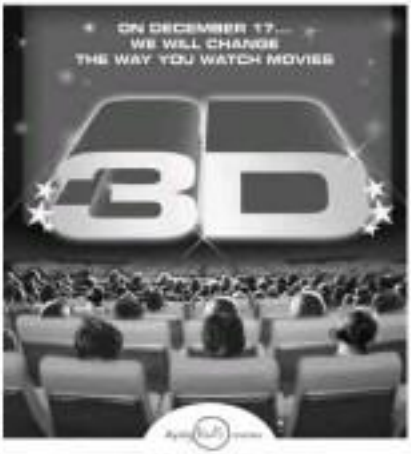
E-mail: lsa@mb.com.ph

JOLINA, with daughter and niece Pamela, tidy up the huge Nativity corner set on the terrace.

SANTA and his helpers, stuffed toys

YULE-tide jolly Patricia (Ads') creation of the San Mateo mountains.

HUMANO Nicanora and Child enjoyed plein (right).



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AVATAR

TWO shaped light ors hung by the door.

A Jolina good time

'Tis the season to be festive and bright—like this singer-actress' comfort zone

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rony Homillada

A RAG doll frame...why not!

SNOWMAN-crowning piece

FATHER Christmas—carols guard.

DAD Joe gave us a whole of the floral arrangement.

QUITE EXPECTED, THIS Quezon City residence is so cheery, festive and bright as the singer-actress who calls this place home.

Time to feast, Jolina Magdangal's home is twice as jolly every Yuletide season.

"It's not as bright. If as the lessons on 9th carpet—lower in Mendiola-ong, but it's chock-full moreighter makes us feel the holiday spirit," Jolina points out.

Still, it's all the more special because Jolina's parents personally decorated it.

"With our helpers, my mom took charge of the interiors and my dad, the exteriors. He put up the Christmas lights and lantern outside," she says.

Jolina's mom Paulita stocked each and every single glitter ball and ornament in the house of holly that line each door in the three-story home.

It took two days to finish the décor — something of hundreds of dazzling trinkets which they usually store in boxes in the attic, some say.

Some of the pieces were shipped from abroad, but most are precious finds from various local bazaars.

KERCHIEF napkin ties.

WREATHS and bows of holly

Rare ornaments

"We got a lot of rare ornaments from bazaars," Jolina says. "Some ornaments only bring out their prettiest once a year, some twice (like)."

The tea Nativeunder soldiers at the entrance were from Jolina's fashion gallery, a part of the annual Noel Christmas Bazaar at the World Trade Center (Dec. 10 to 20) this year.

"It's for a good cause. Proceeds will be donated to the Gifts Kapuso Foundation, the Sarcoidosis Diseases of Immunities and Rumatong ng mga Bayani," she says.

Yet another holiday tradition is shopping for her numerous godchildren.

Jolina has lost count on the number of kids who call her ninong. "My mom and I divide my Christmas shopping list so it wouldn't be that stressful."

This year Christmas came early for the Magdangals.

"When I got home from Singapore middle of November, the house was already decorated," she recounts.

Perfect tree

They found the perfect tree, all seven feet of it, this year.

In the previous years, it was either too short or too tall. "This year it was just right. It didn't scrape the ceiling," she says.

When Daddy Joe was small, his father would bring home a fresh pine tree from Baguio.

"My dad tells me that a real tree smells good," she says.

Every year, the Magdangals follow Iloilo-specific holiday traditions.

"I make it a point not to accept work on Christmas and New Year's Eve," she says.

After Midnight Mass and Noche Buena, gift-giving follows. "On Christmas Day, we drive to

JOLINA, C1

THREE-storey house is lit up with massive Christmas lanterns set up by dad, with the help of an electrician.

ECLECTIC design of the living room was put together by mom Paulina.

CHERRY scenery kitchen is mom's comfort zone.

A PAIR of chairs from Spain

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"EXCITED AKO," Aga Muhlach said Wednesday as the jubilee "Hulog ang Pasko" (year 15) area headed for typhoon-devastated eastern islands. "I'm pre-weakly bringing school supplies and toys to the kids—and our brand of happiness." Donations of old toys and books are still being accepted at all branches of the food chain.

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